The Bhasaur Movement

Dissertation

for

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

IN HISTORY

PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

Supervised by

DR. KIRPAL SINGH

M.A., Ph.D.

Reader

Department of History

By

AJIT SINGH KAHLON

June, 1980

Department of History

Punjabi University, Patiala

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~~Dear~~ Dear Doctor Sahib

This is in reference to your letter accepting our invitation to act as Internal/External examiner for evaluation of the dissertation entitled The Bhasaur Movement submitted by Sh. Ajit Singh Kalkon. for the M.Phil. examination.

A copy of the relevant extract of the ordinances relating to M.Phil. examination is attached together with dissertation of the candidate for evaluation. The dissertation is to be evaluated separately by one external and one Internal Examiner and the Viva-Voce examination, which is compulsory, shall be conducted by a Board of 3 examiners jointly consisting of the external examiner, Head of the Department and the Supervisor concerned (Where Head of the Department is the Supervisor, the Board shall consist of two examiners). The candidate who obtains at least Grade 'B' in dissertation including viva-voce (weightage 4 credits) and seminars pertaining to dissertation/ project work (weightage 4 credits) and shall be deemed to have passed in dissertation paper. The value of grades awarded by both the examiners (weightage of 6 credits each) for the dissertation work shall be counted separately in order to determine the over all grade to be awarded to a candidate for his dissertation and viva-voce. The date of viva-voce examination will be intimated to you by the Head of the Department.

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The receipt of the dissertation may kindly be acknowledged.

Yours sincerely,

S.S.Bal

(S.S.BAL)
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13. The result of course work (Sessional and Semester Examination) shall be compiled in grades:-

Grade	Qualitative Assessment	Point Value of Grade
O	Outstanding	6
A	Very Good	5
B+	Good	4
B	Average/Fair	3
C	Satisfactory	2
D	Poor	1
E	Very Poor	0

A candidate shall be required to earn at least grade B in order to pass the entire course exoluding dissertation. Candidates getting grade in the course work, lower than Grade B shall have to improve the grade by re-appearing in the course work paper(s) of his choice of any semester. For this, he shall be allowed not more than two subsequent consecutive chances.

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$$GP_A = \frac{G+G1 + C2G2 + G3G3+....}{C1 + C2 + C3 +}$$

Where C1,C2-----, are credit points of the course G1,G2-- are the respective grade points obtained by the student.....

15. The dissertation to be submitted by a candidate must comply with the following conditions:-

a) It must be written in English, except in Language subjects where the concerned language will be the medium

* In the matter of calculating final grade point average secured by a candidate if a fraction worked out to be 0.50 or more, he shall be placed in the next grade.

Cont.....2.....

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PREFACE

Bhasaur, a small village in the earstwhile Patiala State has been the centre of multifarious activities of Singh Sabha and Panch Khalsa Diwan Bhasaur giving rise to a movement which goes by the name of Bhasaur Movement. It is characterised by the uniqueness of its pattern in its endevour to re-establish the Sikhism to its prestine purity.

When my teacher suggested this topic to me I was attracted towards this since it was something new about which practically nothing was available in the history books. To make an attempt for its scientific study, is my venture which may prove helpful for the people to understand this movement in a more impartial way.

After sometimes I found that it was not an easy task to find facts from the documents which were mostly silent about this movement. Paucity of material was the main problem. The government records have no mention of this movement. Only the the files of Panch Khalsa Diwan, Bhasaur were made available by the present workers. In this connection I must acknowledge the cooperation of Late Giani Harbhajan Singh, son of Babu Teja Singh (who died in March 1979) who gave me ungrudging help, providing me much material and answering my queries and giving me written statements. He and another worker Giani Nand Singh were kind enough to allow me the recording of their interviews.

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It will not be out of place to give a scope of this movement which is dealt in eight parts of this dissertation. After giving the historical background which depicts the degeneration of the late 19th century in social and religious matters, I have taken the Sikh renaissance giving rise to the Singh Sabha Movement. The third chapter delinates the activities of Singh Sabha Bhasaur and the fourth presents the achievements of Panch Khalsa Diwan, a splinter organization of Chief Khalsa Diwan in Malwa, and highlights the role of Babu Teja Singh.

Fifth chapter is given to the objectives and reforms of this movement in religious and social spheres, which were based on the unabridged Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh. The efforts of this movement for the uplift of women folk through free education of its own type and its various literary and controversial publications are explained in the sixth chapter. This movement though believing in "peaceful non-violence" was bound to provoke the reactions in social and political fields which are described in the last but one chapter. Its impacts in social, religious and political matters are given in the last chapter which ends with the various causes assigned to the arrested progress of this new movement. And the various sources consulted in the preparation of this analysis are mentioned in Bibliography which follows with Appendix about the activities of this movement outside our country.

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I take this opportunity to thank my advisor Dr. Kirpal Singh, who always encouraged me with his scholarly appreciation of my analysis. It cannot be denied that without his guidance this dissertation would not have been possible. I am equally grateful to Professor Fauja Singh, Director, Punjab Historical Studies; Dr. Surjit Singh Bal, Head of the History Department and my old teacher, and the staff of the History Department for their unfailing cooperation.

I am indebted to the staff of the main library, always helpful and anxious for the completion of this task. Not the less I am thankful to the authors whose writings I Have used freely in this dissertation.

Ajit Singh Kahlon

PATIALA (AJIT SINGH KAHLON)

JUNE 30, 1980

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The British occupation of the Punjab released new forces which ushered the era of rational thinking and awakening in socio-religious spheres. The Punjab, 'the land of five rivers' has undergone several changes due to its long and eventful history. It was the frontier province of India, guarding its gateway, of that empire, of which it was the last part to be annexed in 1849.[1]

The inhabitants of this big state covering an area of 1,35,596 square miles, belonged to the three main religions - Hinduism, Mohammedanism and Sikhism. Hinduism in its purity could be defined as the religion of the original Aryan immigrants into India. About four thousand years ago a swarm of invaders from Central Asia (Indo-Aryan) crossed the Hindukush and Afghanistan and at first settled in the Punjab, pressed on Eastward and Southward down the Gangetic Valley and Southern India. In the 8th century, the Muslim monarchs, the Arab followers of Hazarat Mohammed (570-632) made their raids into Northern India. In 712 A.D. Sindh and in 1001 the Punjab down to the Sutlej was conquerred. Mahmud of Gazna built a number of mosques in India and appointed missionaries for the propagation of Islam. For the next 700 years various Muslim dynasties ruled in India till they were ousted nearly everywhere by the Sikhs, the Marathas and the English. In the Punjab Muslim rule

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1. Punjab Census, 1901, p. 4.

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lasted for more than seven hundred years. Islamic victory weakened the power of the Hindus and the social structure of India was changed almost out of recognition. In the Western Punjab most of the population embraced Islam. Aurengzeb (1658-1707) converted a large number of Hindus into Islam by his proselytizing activities.[1]

The third important religion, Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539). He was a radical religious reformer. According to Payne, Guru Nanak's aim "was not to sweep away Hinduism, but to restore it to its ancient purity".[2] His attempts to emancipate completely the Hindu mind from the fetters of mythology, and to assign a low position to the Hindu 'Avtars' were very bold and serious attacks on the Hindu religious beliefs and sentiments shaking Hinduism to its very foundation. His followers, however, went further and thus in course of time a new religion was founded.

Originally, Hinduism was a great Vedic religion and its inspiration was acknowledged even by the sages and seers of other countries. But in the course of time it had degenerated. Pilgrimages and empty rituals had taken the place of real devotion of heart. Blind faith and superstitions had driven the truth away. Guru Nanak depicted that Dharma had taken wings and

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1. Imperial Gazetteer of India Provincial Series I : 1888-89, p. 50.
2. A Short History of the Sikhs ; p. 250.

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vanished. Falsehood prevailed like darkness and the moon of truth was not visible any where.[1] The Hinduism based on caste structure had four castes, Brahmins, Kshatrias, Vaishyas and Shudras. The Brahmins having priestly knowledge controlled the conscious and daily lives of all remaining three groups and exploited them. The Brahmins had reduced Hindu religion into a set of rites and ceremonies. Gokal Chand Narang has rightly said that the spring of religion had been choked up by weeds of un-meaning ceremonials ... Form had supplanted the reality and the highly spiritual character of Hinduism had been burried under the ostentatious paraphernalia of sects.[2] The Brahmins had tightened the rules of the castes in such a way that a very large section of the Hindus had been caste aside as untouchables, who were denied elementary rights, as entry to public temples and the use of public wells.

The Sikhism was inspired by a spirit of revolt against the ceremonials and social restrictions of the Hindu religion. The great institutions of the Sikhs - the 'Sangat' and the 'Langar' gave a serious blow to caste system. G.C.Narang again writes that Nanak left the Hindus of the Punjab immensely better than he had found them. Their belief had been enobled, their worship purified, the rigidity of caste considerably relaxed, their mind greatly emancipated, and they had now become more fit to enter on the career of natural progress to which Nanak's successors

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1. 'Majh ki War' in Adi Granth.
2. Transformation of Sikhism, p. 31.

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were destined to lead them.[1] Guru Amar Das by instituting separate birth, death and marriage rites greatly dispensed with the service of the Brahmins. In 1699, Guru Gobind Singh took a strong and definite step against caste system. He enjoined that the Sikhs should not hold faith in the institution of caste. They could become members of the Commonwealth of Khalsa only if they were 'Kulnash' (dispensed with caste or tribe) and 'Rit Nash' (dispensed with rituals). The Sikh Gurus tried to remove some other glaring defects of the Hindu society of the Punjab. Women were to be treated with great consideration according to Guru Nanak, who were given inferior status previously. Guru Amardas advocated strongly against the practice of Sati, burning of women on the funeral pyres of their husbands.[2]

Degeneration of Sikhism:

In the course of time the Sikhs had lost their reforming zeal and degenerated like Hindus. During the second half of the 19th century, the Sikhs acquired power and became 'Misaldars'. Though in the 19th century Ranjit Singh welded various Sikh confedracies but with the attainment of political power the religious and social degeneration set in. Power produced wealth and wealth generated irreligiousness. 'Misaldars' were to perform political as well as religious duties. But Ranjit Singh

1. Transformation of Sikhism, p.434.
2. "War Suhi" in Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Vol. III, tr. by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 747.

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weaned away religion from politics by abolishing "Gurmata"[1] in 1805. On the other hand conferment of Jagirs and high ranks upon Sikh nobles by Ranjit Singh blunted their missionary zeal and they acquired inordinate love for wine, women and wealth losing all sense of their social and religious heritage. This degeneration of high gentry effected the general public. The free thinking Sikhs followed their own whims and fancies instead of the precepts of the Gurus. They disguised their long hair and a few started triming their beard and smoking. Through the lust for conquest and an overdose of military and administrative success, the Sikhs lost most of their power of resistance alongwith their zeal for social and religious reformation. And towards the close of the 19th century Sikhism had become very much Hinduised.[2]

After annexation the Sikhs not only lost their kingdom but their religious zeal also. According to a report, "with the annexation of the Punjab Sikhism lost much of its old popularity and its members, uncertain of the attitude of their new masters refrained from bringing up their sons for baptism".[3] Although the Sikh religion condemns caste-system and inequality, the Sikhs of those days were split into various castes and subcastes. Idol

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1. The Gurmata or collective decision by the Sikhs, to be adopted whenever the Khalsa faced any religious or social problems and during a common threat is the Khalsa was to be faced.
2. Saint Nihal Singh, The Sikh's struggle against strangulation in the Punjab Past and Present, Vol. VII(April 1973), p. 14.
3. Mr. D.Petric, Assistant Director, Criminal Intelligence, Govt. of India, 1911, ~~p. 7.~~ A Report, p.7.

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worship was forbidden but the devotees of the Gurus were far from being the monotheists. Hinduism had pushed images into the holy shrines, where idol worship thrived. Their Hinduisation had laid them open to such social vices as early marriage, enforced widowhood, the inferior status of women, and infanticide of female children. The net effect of this process had been the arrested growth of Sikhism and rendering of its professors unprogressive, reactionary, weak and inert.[1]

A still more subtle attach consisted of the monetary offerings of Hindus to the Sikh priests and the lineal descendant of the Gurus. Consequently the influence of those subsidised people was enlisted on the side of the Hinduisation of the Khalsa. The descendants of the Gurus presided over the large Hindu conferences and laid stress upon the statement that the Sikhs really were Hindus; and this statement would resound from all the Sikh priest craft. It was very hard to conquer such forces like those, when the education was deficient among the masses.[2] Different sources speak volume of the degeneration in Sikhism of the late 19th century. According to an English newspaper, "with in the next twentyfive years, one third of the Majha area would be Christian. The Malwa would follow suit, just as we do not see any Buddhists in the country except in images, in the same fashion the Sikhs .... visible in their turbans and their other

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1. Nihal Singh, op.cit., p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 16.

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religious forms ..., will be seen only in pictures in museums".[1]

Another reference is given to "the occupant of a Bunga in the precincts of the Tarn Tarn Gurdwara who had embraced Christianity and hung across on a wall of it, turning it thereby into a Chapel".[2]

On Tuesday, Bhadon 31 (Sept. 14, 1897) the Pujaris of Tarn Taran Gurdwara held a Sharadha ceremony in honour of the 5th Guru. And the feasting outsiders were non-Sikhs, who smoked there.[3]

Thus the above examples tell us that the Sikh symbols and forms were disappearing and the non-Sikh ceremonies were held even in Sikh Gurdwaras.

In Sikhism Gurdwaras are given much importance. It is always a matter of honour and duty to the Sikhs to safeguard the Gurdwaras and the holy script. Gurdwaras are not only the living embodiment of the struggles, spiritual and political of the Panth but also stand for the social and religious day to day life of the whole community.[4] After 1849 A.D. the defeated Khalsa lost its vigilence for their sacred Gurdwaras. The Mahants and the

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1. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p. 22. A note in the Khalsa Akhbar of Lahore, May 25, 1894 by its editor Giani Dit Singh.

2. Ibid., quoted from the issue of Khalsa Advocate of Amritsar of 22.4.1905.

3. Ibid., quoted from Khalsa Akhbar, Lahore, Issue of October 8, 1897.

4. Ruchi Ram Sahni, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, pp.1-2.

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Sadhus incharge of various Gurdwaras gave up all fears of the Sikh Sangats and became hereditary masters of the sacred shrines. Gradually they gave up all symbols of Sikhism excepting the beard and turban. They adopted all sort of corruptions and vices that are liable to come in with unearned wealth. Idols were placed in the various Gurdwaras and their worship was becoming common contrary to the principles advocated by the Sikh Gospel.[1]

The new laws made them (the priests) , the virtual proprietors of the Gurdwaras with all their large offerings and the landed endowments attached to them. The law courts did not provide sufficient protection to the Sangats who had previously exercised effective control over the administration of their places of worship.[2] Idol worship was not only tolerated, but encouraged as an additional source of income from the orthodox Hindus and debauchery and corruption was practised.[3]

Teja Singh writes that in post-Ranjit Singh period Sikhism with higher classes had become a mere fashion of the turban and beard. Their baptism and five symbols became mere anomaly.[4] But the new Jat nobility assumed the practices of Hindu Rajput princes. They worshipped Hindu gods besides their

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1. Ibid., p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. (i) "Introduction"
3. Ibid., p. 9.
4. Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening, p. 30.

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'Granth Sahib'. They started venerating the cow and going on pilgrimage to Hindu Holy places. They also started feeding the Brahmins and consulting astrologers and soothsayers. In many sections, especially the Bedis, female infanticide like Rajputs was practised in the Cis-Sutlej regions and Central Punjab.[1]

Khushwant Singh has traced another reason of numerical inferiority of Sikhs which was accentuated in Sikhism after the annexation. While the annexation brought the Punjabi Muslims and Hindus into direct contact with their more enlightened Indian co-religionists, the Sikhs were only reunited to their Malwa brethren, who were even less educated than themselves. The Sikhs, reduced from a position of dominance to one of subservience not only to the British but also to the Muslim and the Hindus, had no option but to turn to their rulers for guidance. They needed some platform to seek and win the collaboration of their rulers in the literary drive.

The Sodhis and Bedis, the inheriters of the Gurus' lineage were never the less responsible for the general degeneration in the religion established by their forefathers. The code of conduct prescribed by the 10th Guru was ignored and the people were being mislead by the Sodhis and the Bedis, who were seriously engaged on setting up 'Gurdwaras' of their own. Baba Bir Singh Naurangabadi, Baba Sahib Singh of Una, Sodhi Sahib Singh of

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1. Devinder Singh, Origin of the Singh Sabha Movement, p.

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Anandpur, Sodhis of Kartarpur and Guru Har Sahai had become Gurus.

The people were falling in to the slough of worship of many gods and goddesses, graves and tombs. They worshipped Sakhi Savar Sultan,[1] Bhairon[2] and Guga Pir.[3] In superstitious practices there was no difference between the rural Sikhs and Hindus.[4] The other important factor which contributed towards the decline of Sikhism after the annexation was the Missionary propaganda of the Christian Missions, who were bent upon converting the Sikhs more than any other sect.

When Punjab became the part of the British Empire Sikhism alongwith other native religiohs was exposed to the influence of Western missionaries. The Christian missionaries got state encouragement to convert people to Christianity. When the youngest son of Ranjit Singh, Maharaja Daleep Singh and Sir Raja Harnam Singh of Kapurthala State became Christians, the rot had become evident and with the onrush of other faiths, there was a great erosion and the Sikh population was dwindling.[5]

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1. Sakhi Sarves Sultan was son of a Baghdadi, who migrated to Punjab in Sialkot in 1220. His real name was Sayad Ahmad. His shrines known as 'Pir Khanas' were established in the Central and Eastern Punjab.
2. Bhairon was a Hindu God.
3. Guga-Pir was a Chauhan Rajput Pir of Bikaner who lived in 11th century. He was expert in disinfecting the Snakes-venom. He was worshipped as the incarnation of 'Sheshnag' on Sudi Ninth of Bhadon month. Worship of Guga is still in vogue in all sections of Panjabis. Snake charmers are given presents on that day & this day is celebrated as festival of 'Kheer' and Puras'.
4. Punjab Census Report, 1881, p. 137.
5. Man Singh Nirankari, "The Nirankaris", in The Punjab Past and Present, Vol. VII (April,1973), p. 7.

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Since 1834, a Presbyterian minister John C Lowrie had arrived from America to set up a mission at Ludhiana. As the missionaries were instructed, they hoped that the dominant religion of the Punjab, Sikhism, was a species of pure theism. They believed that the Sikhs might prove more accessible to scriptural truth than the Hindus and Mohammadans.[1] Missionary Church was established in Amritsar in 1852 which followed a vernacular school, a high school, a girls school and a midwifery hospital. In Sialkot the United Presbyterian Mission began with special success. Cambridge Mission, the Baptist Mission and the Church of Scotland also entered the field to cover the entire country with their net work.[2] In all important cities such as Jullundur (1848), Ambala (1849), Ambala Cantt (1850), Rawalpindi (1856), Sabathu (1856), Kapurthala (1892), Rupar (1890), Lyallpur (1894), Khanna (1884), Phillaur (1897) and Kasur (1900)[3] Christian missions started vigorous compaign. John Neuton followed John Horunie, and brought a press with him. The mission published Bible and tracts in Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Kashmiri language. It published Punjabi Vocabulary in 1839 and Punjabi to English Dictionary in July 1854. Bible was translated in Urdu in 1865 and in Punjabi in 1868.

The main function of the missions was to propagate the Gospel of Christianity and to convert the Punjabis especially

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1. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p. 26.
2. Ibid., p. 27.
3. Panjab, edited by Ganda Singh, p. 79.

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the low castes. They believed that they had to fulfil Christ Ministry of healing, relief of suffering and of ignorance. Christian institutions were undoubtedly a useful instrument in making conversions. To spread the word of Bible it was necessary to have literate people, and so they set up educational institutions.

It was Christianity that for the first time in history brought the people to a consciousness of their own backwardness and degeneration. Thus the Western Education and Christian Missions brought awakening in the population of the Punjab. Missions were centre of vigorous social reform propaganda.[1]

Work of Orientalists:

The Orientalists were to play a significant role in the late 19th century. Warren Hastings took the steps which led to Europeans becoming acquainted with Sanskrit and Hinduism. Simple code of Hindu law was put together and translated into English in 1726. In 1785 Charles Wilkins, published a translation of the 'Bhagwad Geeta'. Sir William Jones established the Asiatic Society of Bengal for researches into the Past History and antiquities of India. He published 'Shakuntla' in English. H.H. Wilson published the famous book, 'Religious Sects of the Hindus.'

In 1865 Dr. Gouliel William Leinter founded a society named 'Anjuman-i-Punjab[2] with the object of revival of ancient

1. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, Autobiography, p. 45.
2. The Gazetteer of the Punjab 1888-89, p. 185.

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learning, philosophy, ethnology, history and antiquities of India and advancement of knowledge through vernaculer language. The result was that the lost history of Indians greatness began to be reconstructed by the orientalists. European appreciation of Indian literature turned the mind of Indian to their rich cultural heritage which they had so long neglected. Thus was started the socio-cultural reform movement of the Punjab.

Hence the challenge of Western Science, Christian ethics and humanitarianism provoked self-examination and reinterpretation in Indian religions. The result was a wide movement of reformation which took pronouncedly sectarian forms in the Arya Samaj fundamentalism in Hinduism and Ahmadiyah honesty in Islam. The more liberal expressions were the Brahma Sabha later known as Brahmo Samaj founded by a pioneer in this field, Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal in 1828. Another was Prarthana Samaj which began in Bombay in 1867. The encounter in the Punjab was marked by aggressiveness and acerbicity; and the last decades of the 19th century were filled with abrasive religious polemic in which the Christians, Muslims and Arya Samajists freely participated.[1]

A view has been expressed that the Punjab got law and order after centuries of troubles. The only possible outlet for the appiration and expression of the people was the organization of peaceful movement aiming at social and cultural development of masses. When the people came into contact with the glories of

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1. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p. 28.

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Western thought, they had to dig for glories in their own pasts and bringing them to surface to avoid inferiority complex. Thus the subject was Indian though the effect was Western, and the product in majority of the case, therefore, was mixture of the two.[1] This view that the organization of peaceful movement was the outlet for the aspiration and expression of the people seems to be inconclusive if not misleading. This one sided view cannot be accepted as all inclusive since it would be a denial of historical process. History reveals that when casteless Islam threatened caste ridden Hinduism the later had to think for self examination to preserve itself which resulted in Bhakti movement. And when Christianity invaded Indian religions, they were compelled to think for self-examination resulting in social and religious reforms. And especially in the Punjab, Christianity was the compelling force which hastened self preservation for Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs alike through various reformist movement.

Thus the Sikh Reform Movement may be traced as the result of the emergence of new forces. Western education and thought, found rationalism which opened the way for the self examination and reformation. The activities of Christian missionaries gave death blow to all Indian religions including the Sikhism.

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1. Devinder Singh, op.cit., p.

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In this way all these forces combined with the degeneration in Sikhism had made imperative for the Sikhs to organize a new movement for identification and self preservation which was to bring social and religious reforms in the community. Thus it can be infered that the ground was ready and fertile for the germination of the sead of socio-religious reformations.

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CHAPTER II

SIKH RENAISSANCE

The British rule in India marked the emergence of new forces in this peninsula. One of the most important factors which affected social renovation was the Western Education. The East India Company had already initiated the process of education and the Government had taken upon itself as one of the objectives to educate the people.

The Charter Act of 1813 made a certain change in the attitude of the rulers towards their masses. A sum of one lac was set apart for the revival and improvement of literature, the encouragement of the learned natives of India and the introduction of scientific knowledge among Indians.

The educational policy of the Britishers was announced in Bentinck's famous proclamation of 1835 in which he promulgated that the Chief aim of the educational policy should be to promote a knowledge of European literature and science through English medium. English became official language.

Sir Charles Wood's despatch to the Court of Directors (1854) had been described as "the Magna Charta of English Education in India". It enunciated the aim of education as the diffusion of Arts, Science, Philosophy and literature

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of Europe. The study of Indian language was to be encouraged. It recommended the establishment of a net work of institutions. An Education Department was to be established in every province.[1]

Prior to British system there was no dearth of schools but the system of education was premitive in Punjab. And higher education was no where.[2] In 1856 it was proposed to open some thirty schools at the District head quarters, about one hundred schools in the interior and one central college at Lahore.[3] Government encouraged the people to open schools with Government aid and supervision.[4] In 1864 Government Colleges were established in Lahore and Delhi, by XIX Act of 1882, Punjab University College in 1860, and Law School of Lahore in 1870, were opened. In 1875 Mayo School of Industrial Art was established and in 1881, central training college for teachers was opened at Lahore.[5] In 1900 Government Colleges were 12, secondary schools 383 and primary schools 2643 and private institutions for males and females were 4803.[6] The English Education opened the gates of Western

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1. Parliamentary Papers, 1854, Vol. 47, p. 155.
2. The First Punjab Administration Report, p. 143.
3. The Third Punjab Ad. Report, p. 43.
4. Ibid., p. 44.
5. Punjab Administration Report 1892-93, p. 322.
6. Report Public Instruction Punjab (1899-1900).

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learning. Lala Lajpat Rai observed the impact of modern education on Indian thinking, "The English education imparted in schools and colleges established by the British and Christian Missions opened the gates of Western thought and Western literature to the mass of educated Indians. Some of the British teachers... consciously or unconsciously inspired their pupils with ideas of freedom as well as nationalism[1]. It broke the barrier which had hitherto shut India from Western World.

The most important result of the impact of Western culture was the replacement of blind faith in current traditions beliefs and convertions by the spirit of rationalism which seeks to inquire and argue before accepting any thing. The revolt of mind against the tyrany of dogma and traditional authorities, beliefs and customs is the first requisite for freedom of thought and conscience, which lies at the root of progress in social and religious spheres of life. Western education instilled into the minds of the people a spirit of rational enquiry in the basis of their religion and society. In fact all the reform movements which arose in Punjab during the later years of the 19th century were a product of this system of education[2].

Thus the impact of Western civilization roused the Indians from their medieval torpor and gave a rude shock to

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1. Young India, New York, 1927, p. 114.
2. A.R. Desai's chapter on Education in his Social Background to Indian Nationalism, Bombay, 2nd ed. 1954.

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their cherished ideas and institutions. In every shape of life they had to meet the challenge of new culture which forced them to revise their orthodox ideas. Indians gave up their attitude of uncritical defence of authority, tradition and customs and so started their movements for social and religious reforms.[1]

This would not be wrong if the close of the 19th century is called the age of Renaissance and reformations. The spirit of rationalism became evident, first of all in social and religious spheres. In Hindus, Chatranis, Arya Samajists, Dao Dharmi, Sanatan Dharma etc., became prevalent as reformist movements. In Muslims, like Anjuman-i-Himait Islam movements were organized. The main movements in Sikhs were Nirankaris, Kukas and Singh Sabha.[2]

Among the Sikhs the period of British rule after annexation of the Panjab was a period of intense social and religious ferment. Stiring the Sikhs more than any other community a protest against the rot and degeneration, that has already been depicted in the last chapter, was registered long before the Singh Sabha was started in 1873. Baba Dyal (1783-1855) born in Peshawar from Ram Sahai and Ladiki,[3] had cavilled at the short coming of the rich classes and assailed

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1. Gurnek Singh, Social and Religious Reforms in the Punjab (1870-1900), p. 27.
2. Fauja Singh, "Adhunik Punjab (1901-1960)" in Punjab edited by Ganda Singh, 1962, pp. 52-53.
3. Ganda Singh, "Nirankari Samparday" in Punjab, p. 90.

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the rites and observances. His main target was the worship of images that had crossed the thres holds of even Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and other religious places like Gurdwara Tarn Taran etc, due to the influence of Sanatan Dharama[1]. Baba Dyal reemphasized the belief in Nirankar - the Formless One. The Nirankaris preached salvation by meditating on God. They regarded Nanak as their saviour, who taught the way of salvation. They started "Anand Marriage" and threw their dead into the rivers. This movement parallels the Brahmo Samaj of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in fighting orthodoxy and widow-remarriage. The Nirankaris considered the use of false weights and speaking lie as henious crime. Their teachings were contained in the book, The Hukam Nama[2]. Sati was prohibited, smoking was forbidden[3]. Honest work for sustence and obligatory service of parents were their tenants. They did not consult astrologers or Brahmins for auspicious time and they were opposed to the show of dowry. They used the word of Nirankar instead of Bhagauti in Ardas and believed alongwith Guru Granth in the existence of a living teacher and guide[3].

While tracing the rise of new Sikh movements a well known writer has remarked that the climate of the Orient has always been productive of massaiahs and prophets. Gobind

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1. Ibid.
2. At present their scripture is Avtar Bani.
3. Man Singh Nirankari, op. cit., p. 10.

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Singh's declaration to end the line of human Gurus was ignored and 'Sausakhi' was forged to sanctify pretensions of priesthood. The Nirankaris and the Namdharis were born out of their rise from rustic poverty to sovereign opulence. And then out of their reduction to a subject people under an align race. In the first phase power produced wealth and wealth in its turn bred irreligiousness, which gave rise to the Nirankari sect.

In the second phase the loss of power roused passions to recreate the golden age that had passed. And the Kuka movement examplifys this theme. Its leader Baba Ram Singh preached the faith of Ten Gurus and brought back lukeworm people to Sikh faith with rejuvinated enthusiasm. The Namdhari Movement later known as Kuka Movement aimed at restoring the Sikh faith to its purity of the days of Guru Gobind Singh.

Its founder Balak Singh[2] (1799-1862), deputed to Hazro by Saien Jawahar Mal to look after the Sikh congregation, enjoined upon his followers to meditate on the Name of God day and night, to celebrate marriage according to Anand Ceremony and not to spend much on this occasion, to desist from giving dowry, not to eat meat or take intoxicants, not to beg but to earn their livelihood and support their co-religiounists and to live a pure and morally uprighteous life.[3]

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1. Khushwant Singh, op. cit., pp. 121-22.
2. Ganda Singh, "Kuka (Namdhari) Lahir" in Punjab, p. 96. Jawahar Mal started this movement. Balak Singh was born in Chhoie village in Attock district in 1799. His father, Bhai Dyal Singh was Arora shopkeeper. Balak Singh died on 6th Dec. 1862 A.D.
3. Bhagat Singh, "The Kuka Movement " in Punjab Past & Present, ~~PPP~~, Vol.VII, pp. 148.

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But his successor Ram Singh was the most prominent, who left Khalsa Army at Lahore, to create individuals who should have a strong character and firm convictions and be fearless in action. He wanted his followers to shed off superstitions and cowardice. He desired of the Sikhs to receive the baptism of Guru Gobind Singh and he chalked out vigorous plans for Amrit Parchar. He was openly hostile to the Sodhis, Bedies, Mahants and Brahmans. He was against the idol worship and live a pure and austere life. Honesty and hard work were made essential for Kuka mode of living. They were enjoined not to steal and encroach upon another's right. He was against caste distinctions, and a strong exponent of widow remarriage. He was in favour of mixed congregations and preached against the 'Purdah' system. His followers tied 'Sidhi Pag', flat turban, which is not allowed to come over the earr's and wore a worsted necklace containing 108 beads. A Namdhari Rahitnama pronounced very strict injunctions regarding the evil customs of female infanticide, early marriage barter of daughters in marriage, and dowry.

To preach Kuka doctrines, enthusiastic Namdharis were appointed in different parts of the country, who were called Subas. In 1820 some enthusiastic Kukas attacked the butchers of Amritsar and on 15th July, 1871 they attacked slaughter house at Rai Kot, killing three and injuring 9 persons. On 11th January, 1872 when the Kukas met to celebrate Lohari

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festival they attacked the butchers of Malerkotla on 15th January. The Nawab's army repulsed then and 68 Kukas were brought to Malerkotla where the D.C. of Ludhiana, Mr. Cowan got forty-five Kukas blown up with guns without a formal trial. Baba Ram Singh was ordered to be deported from India by Forsyth to Rangoon where he died on November 29, 1884. Baba Hari Singh, Baba Partap Singh and Baba Jagjit Singh were their leaders.

It appears that Baba Ram Singh was not a person who should revolt against the authority openly or secretly. He had no political pretensions. He accepted the advice of the Government at Amritsar, Anandpur etc. He accepted his internment in his village without grumbling. As such any bycott of the Government educational institutions or foreign cloth or British courts by Baba Ram Singh seems incredible. Dr Ganda Singh writes that the Britishers were frightened by the Mutiny, hence they branded this purely religious movement as political and revolutionary.[1]

Both Nirankari and Namdhari movements had but limited impact. Since they continued the practice of Gurgadi, both were led by their respective Gurus, who were to be the supreme authority and their words were the law. They were believed to be infallible and supreme. The Nirankaris and the

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1. Dr Harbans Singh, 'Singh Sabha Lahir' in Punjab, edited by Ganda Singh, p. 131. Both these could not became popular due to their limited spheres and sectarian characters.

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Namdharis did not care to alter or improve their organizations.[1] Moreover the Kuka Movement was hampered by the activities of a handful of its over zealous and fanatic followers. Unlike their successor movement, Singh Sabha, they were not democratic in character, hence couldnot become mass movements. The ideas of framing a constitution and holding elections for the Singh Sabha were Western in origin. In this respect the Singh Sabha movement represented a break with the old orthodoxy.

Genesis of Singh Sabha Movement

The fourth movement was the more important, as the religious cum social movement, called Singh Sabha, because it remained, on the religious plan, true to the orthodox tradition of 'No Guru Save the Granth'. On the social plane it met the challenge of modern times with modern weapons.

After the annexation of the Punjab, the Punjab exposed the leaderless and dispirited Sikh masses, to the preaching of Christian missionaries and the proselytizing activities of the Hindus Arya Samajists. Government controlled all important religious seats. The propaganda of Gurudom was started by the Sodhis and Bedis. Sikhs came under Brahmanical influence and

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1. Ganda Singh, "Kuka Lahir" in Punjab, p. 96.

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Sikh Gurus became a part of Hindu philosophy. In 1875 Swami Daya Nand had established Arya Samaj which was busy in denouncing all religions . On the other side while Hindus and Muslims became alert in religious matters, Sikhs remained ignorant. Sikh children, the students in Christian schools knew much of Christianity than Sikhism.[1] In 1873 four Sikh students of the Amritsar Mission School proclaimed to become Christian, the Sikh feelings were further shocked. Added to this was a series of carping lectures in Amritsar on the Sikh faith and the narration of Guru Nanak's life in deliberately garbled details by Shardha Ram Phillauri.[2]

To consider these matters some prominent Sikhs including Thakur Singh Sandhanwalia, Baba Khem Singh Bedi, Kanwar Bikram Singh of Kapurthala, convened a meeting in Amritsar in 1873. Their deliberations resulted in an association called Singh Sabha inaugurated at Manji Sahib on the Dushera day October 1, 1873 in the presence of the prominent Sikhs from all classes.

Amritsar Singh Sabha undertook to achieve the following objectives:

1. To restore Sikhism to its prestine purity.
2. To edit and publish historical and religious books.
3. To propagate current knowledge, using Punjabi as the medium and to start newspapers and magazines in Punjabi.

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1. Dr Ganda Singh, "Singh Sabha Lahir" in Punjab, p. 123.
2. Harbans Singh, op. cit., p. 28.

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4. To interest the highly placed English men and to ensure their association with the educational programme of the Sikhs.[1]

The Singh Sabha gained quick support of the literate section of the community and many scholars and leaders voluntered to join its ranks. A vigorous compaign ensued with two major thursts, the depreciation of un-Sikh customs and social evils and the encouragement of Western Education. Progressive concern was as pronounced as the revivalist impulse. The reformist ideology percolated to the Sikh peasantry primarily through Sikh soldiers serving in the army or those who had retired. One of the regiments had constituted a choir of reciters to go round the villages and sing the sacred hymns at Singh Sabha congregations.[2]

The movement reached the Punjab from one corner to the other. Besides the social and religious reforms, it brought fresh leven to the intelectual and cultural life of the region. Like all progressive movements in the age of orthodoxy and conservatism, nevertheless, its supporters initially met with strong opposition especially in the village. They were scorned and ridiculed for their novel ideas. In apigramatic couplet, satirizing their new frangled enthusiasm, had become

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1. Ibid., p. 29.
2. Ibid.

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part of Punjabi folklore :

When the barn is emptied of grain
What better can you do than turn a Singh Sabhia.

Its name was corrupted from Singh Sabha to 'Singh Safa', signifying the widespread destruction carried by the plague epidemic of 1902.[1]

While all other communities at that time got their inspiration for reform from Western education the Sikhs' first endavours in this line were the results of their inherent genius. The reformers had to discover the pure doctrine and then to preach it to the ignorant masses. They realized that education of the Sikhs was needed to rouse them to feel the necessity of reform, as the first attempt at reform in the shape of Namdhari movement had already been paralysed due to the lack of common feelings among the masses. On the other side the British Government learned a lesson that, in their own interest, they should not antagonise the reforming elements among the Sikhs, rather they should keep and guide it to the work of reform.[2]

Giani Sardul Singh put forward a point to celebrate the birthday of Guru Nanak in Baisakh instead of Kartik. After 3 years' discussions a Gurparnali or calendar was prepared giving the true dates of births and deaths of the Gurus.[3]

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1. Giani Mehar Singh, "Singh Sabha Gujarwal" in Grewal Itihas, pp. 114-15, cited in the Punjab Past and Present Vol. VII, p. 29.

2. Teja Singh, "Singh Sabha Movement" in The Punjab Past and Present Vol. VII, April 1973, p. 31.

3. Ibid., p. 32.

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Dasam Granth was put to close examination to discover how much of it was Gobind Singh's composition. Thirty two different versions were collected to work upon. The work grew more. So it was entrusted to the 'Gurmat Granth Pracharak Sabha', under the Secretaryship of Dr Charan Singh. A true recension of the Dasam Granth was prepared alongwith other works such as Gyan Singh's Panth Parkash and Twarikh Khalsa, Pt. Tara Singh's Guru Granth Kosh and Tirath Sangrahek.

In 1894 Bhai Kaur Singh and Vir Singh established Khalsa Tract Society in Amritsar, which issued monthly tracts on Sikhism.[1]

In all pbaces Singh Sabhas were established. Professor Gurmukh Singh[2] of Oriental College, Lahore gathered about him men of sterling worth and established a body of progressive Sikhs founding a Singh Sabha at Lahore on 2nd Nov. 1929. He got it affiliated to Singh Sabha Amritsar, which became the central body called the 'Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar'. Diwan Buta Singh was the President of Lahore Singh Sabha and Gurmukh Singh was its Secretary.

Special care was taken to keep out opostates, the opponents of Sikhism and those who had proved abnoxious to the Government. Even Europeans could become members in the

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1. Teja Singh, op. cit., p. 32.

2. He was lecturer in Panjabi in Oriental College, Lahore. He was a man of strong personality and clear vision without any compromise with Hinduism.

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educational branch. It was provided in the fundamental rules that nothing against the government could be discussed in the Singh Sabha meetings. These rules became the model for all the Sabhas founded under this movement.

Professor Gurmukh Singh went about preaching the mission of the new order and was able to create and get affiliated scores of Singh Sabhas in the country. Due to the popularity of Amritsar Diwan, all the influential people, even conservative in their outlook were attracted towards this centre. Baba Khem Singh Bedi became its President and Professor Gurmukh Singh its Chief Secretary, with several Secretaries in charge of sub-committees for religious, literary, educational and press matters. As the Akal Takhat and the Golden Temple authorities were cooperating, the Hukamnamas from the Takhat were often issued in favour of the reformers, writes Teja Singh.

Khalsa Diwan, Lahore (1886)

But the phase of cooperation among the different Singh Sabhas lasted for a short time only, because the Khalsa Diwan Amritsar contained many leading members whose zeal for reform was only skindeep. Unwilling to shed off the old tradition in its entirity, they still clung to untouchability, idol worship, man worship etc. The Khalsa Diwan Amritsar failed to win popular support for the concentration of power in the hands of aristocrates was inconsistent with the principles of social

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equality preached by the Singh Sabhas. In their anxiety to remain loyal to Mahants and Pujaris of Sikh Takhats, its leaders failed to come up to the expectations of those who wanted to restore Sikhism to its pristine purity.[1] They sided with the priests in allowing low caste Sikhs only at special hours in Gurdwaras and were not allowed to make offering before Guru Granth Sahib.[2]

There began to appear a cleavage between the wholehoggers, most of them from Lahore centre, and the slow paced reformers belonging to Amritsar centre. Professor Gurmukh Singh found his position more and more difficult, advocating the removal of the disability of untouchables, who had been presenting their difficulties before the Diwan, but had always been put off with one pretext or the other. Things came to a head on the question of providing cushions for the seating of Khem Singh Bedi, when he came to pay a visit to the Golden Temple.[3]

Professor Gurmukh Singh was forced to sever his connection with Amritsar Diwan and to found a new Khalsa Diwan at Lahore, to which he affiliated almost all the Singh Sabhas. Amritsar was left with only Rawalpindi and Faridkot Sabhas.[4]

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1. Teja Singh, op. cit., p. 34.
2. Ruchi Ram Sahni, op. cit., p. 150.
3. Ibid. Khem Singh claim of a special privilege as a discendant of the founder of Sikhism, was opposed by Professor's group, who wanted equal treatment for all in the presence of Granth Sahib.
4. Teja Singh, op. cit., p. 34.

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But Amritsar Diwan still enjoyed prestige on account of its association with central temple and some ruling princes. To counteract the innovations introduced by the extreme reformers, a Hinduised commentary of the Holy Granth was prepared by Gyani Badan Singh.[1]

All the real supporters of reform gathered round Bhai Gurmukh Singh in Lahore Diwan of which Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha was Patron, Sir Attar Singh, Chief of Bhadaur its President and Bhai Gurmukh Singh its Secretary. Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab also gave patronage to this Diwan and Commander-in-Chief was also to patronise it. Gurmukh Singh welcomed Bhai Dit Singh, Vice-President of Arya Samaj and Bhai Maya Singh in the Khalsa Diwan when they were annoyed by the Arya Samajist in 11th Annual Session in Vachhowali Arya Mandir, where the Samajists attacked Sikh Gurus.[2] Bhai Dit Singh, editor of the Khalsa Akhbar and writer of many important books, Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha and Mr. M.A. Macauliffe were the important scholars including Bhagat Lakshman Singh of Rawalpindi who did much to demolish the old theories of the opponents and to elucidate the Sikh need. Dr Jai Singh carried on the work of Shudhi, reconverting those who had gone away to Islam or Christianity. Main work of the Lahore Khalsa Diwan was the

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1. Avtar Singh Vahir's books Khalsa Sudhar Taru, Khalsa Dharm Shastar and Gur Darshan Shastar tried to prove that the Sikhs were Hindus, that the Gurus worshiped gods and goddess and it was wrong to abolish casteism and untouchability.

2. Teja Singh, op. cit., p. 35.

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foundation of the Khalsa College at Amritsar in 1892. But with the deaths of Gurmukh Singh in 1898, of Sir Attar Singh in 1896 and of Dit Singh in 1901, the place of Lahore Diwan was taken by the Chief Khalsa Diwan.

Chief Khalsa Diwan

The first meets of the Chief Khalsa Diwan was held in Malvai Bunga attached to the Golden Temple on the 30th October, 1902. And the inaugural prayer was offered by Babu Teja Singh of Bhasaur, who later on founded Panch Khalsa Diwan of Bhasaur Movement in 1907.[1] Bhai Arjun Singh of Bagrian, was elected President and Sunder Singh Majithia, was the Secretary of this Chief Khalsa Diwan. Out of 150 Singh Sabhas only 29 agreed to join. Their representatives alongwith 47 other, formed the general body.

Bhai Takhat Singh opened Bhai Dit Singh Library of Sikh Literature and History along with Kanya Maha Vidyala, Ferozpur. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid who had done much to counteract the anti-Sikh propaganda of the Arya Samaj, established a Panjabi magazine, called Dukh Nivaran in 1906. All the work done before the Chief Khalsa Diwan was to demolish Sikh belief in the Hindu books and institutions and the Sikhs had been made to stand on their ground. The only thing constructive done so far had been the spread of education and the inculcation of the

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1. For details see chapter III & IV.

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belief that the Sikhs were a separate community, which should have separate institutions, separate rights and separate provisions in the law to protect them. Even the Anand Marriage Act came in 1909.[1]

The Diwan enjoyed great prestige from 1902 to 1904 and when in 1908 the Khalsa College Amritsar went into the hands of the Government, most of the leaders withdrew from its management and came to found a new institution 'The Sikh Educational Committee of the Diwan'. It met annually and established many schools; and fought for the cause of the Panjabi language.[2]

The Chief Khalsa Diwan had five committees , General, Executive, Finance, Advisory and Life Member Committee.[3] The Executive Committee had elected members for 3 years. The source of income was subscriptions, affiliation fee from the societies and other donations such as'Daswandh'. Its constitution was flexible in nature and was subject to amendments. It proved to be much better organized movement than the Nirankari and Namdhari movements before it and the Akali Movement after it.[4]

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1. Teja Singh, op. cit., p. 39.
2. Ibid., pp. 39-40.
3. Chief Khalsa Diwan, Mul Sutra (Amritsar, 1906), pp.1-3.
4. "Chief Khalsa Diwan - Fifty Years of Service (1902-1951)" in the Panjab Past and Present Vol. VII (April, 1973), p. 60.

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The Chief Khalsa Diwan strived for :

1. The uplift of the Sikhs in all spheres, spiritual, social, moral and economic;

2. the propagation of the Guru's Divine Word and carrying on of His teachings to the fartherest hamlet and spread of the fragrance of Nam all round;

3. the removal of illiteracy and spread of education amongst all inrespective of caste and creed; and

4. the protection of the political rights of the Sikhs through constitutional means.

In this achievements may be mentioned Sikh Educational Conference established in 1908 which opened colleges and schools. Khalsa Tract Society established in 1894 flooded the land with religious literature. Khalsa Missionary College was opened in 1908 in Tarn Tarn. 'Khalsa Advocate' was started in 1903 for propagating the ideals of the Diwan.

The leadership of the Sikhs passed into the hands of enlightened and educated men who ushered in a new era of constitutional advancement. The new constitution of the organisation framed in 1902, was registered with the Government on July 9, 1904. It aimed at unifying the divergent elements of the Singh Sabha. The number of Singh Sabhas and Khalsa Diwans affiliated to the Chief Khalsa Diwan in 1902 was 29 which reached to 105 by 1920. And one of the most important Sabhas, which has greatly contributed towards socio-religious reforms particularly in the 'Malwa' region of the Punjab was Singh Sabha, Bhasaur.

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CHAPTER III

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SINGH SABHA BHASAUR
(1893-1907)

The Sri Guru Singh Sabha Bhasaur[1], located in a little village, in Sangrur District at present, about ten kilometer away from Malerkotla on Dhuri Road, then in Patiala State, was established in 1893, the 20th year of the establishment of first Singh Sabha in Amritsar. Its headquarter or Gurdwara is 200 yards outside the village in the Western side on a mound. Bhai Wasawa Singh 'Virakat' or recluse was the first President of this Sabha, who was, long ago, propagating Khalsa principles in Bhasaur village. In that missionary work he enjoyed the close association of Baba Anokh Singh of Kheri village (Sangrur district), Baba Sajan Singh of Bhaina, Baba Kirpal Singh of Tiba and Baba Fateh Singh of Bhasaur etc.[2]

The purity and rigidness of Wasawa Singh helped him to increase his influence in propagation of Sikhism, which touched its peak to give Bhasaur the fame of a stronghold of Sikh preaching. The Bhasaur Singh Sabha was from the very beginning, forthright in the rejection of caste and Brahmanical customs which had infiltrated into Sikhism. It openly advocated the acceptance back into the fold of those who had been led into

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1. Two kilometers from Himatyana Railway Station on Ludhiana to Dhuri rail link.
2. Brahm Singh, "Sankhep Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. XV, p. 51.

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foresaking the Sikh faith. It went further and willingly converted those from other faiths who volunteered for initiation.[1]

The Singh Sabha Bhasaur once again gave rise to the completion of the planning initiated by the 10th Guru. This Sabha was very active in purifying Sikh rituals and establishing its autonomy. Assertion of self identity was then the dominating impulse of the Sikh community as a whole. As Singh Sabha Movement aimed at establishing Sikhism as a distinct community, Bhasaur Sabha preached to act upon the Guru's order of 1699 to keep Khalsa as a distinct community. The mutual exchange of relations and food was henceforth to be abondoned with other communities. Guru's word and Sikh History was to be purified taking out all poisonous distortions in 'Gurmat', the Sikh theology. That difficult task required large heart, enlightened brain, tolerant and rigid to the core of mind personality; who should be above any worldly greed and should not surrender before any supreme power. One who should be always ready to sacrifice his head in such type of selfless service. And Bhasaur Sabha got the required worker as its first sewak (Secretary). He was given the name of Panth Rattan Baba Teja Singh, the central figure of Bhasaur Movement (1867-1933) then a sub-overseer in the irrigation department of Patiala State. He was born in

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1. Harbans Singh, "The Bhapur Diwan and Babu Teja Singh of Bhasaur" in The Punjab Past and Present, Vol. IX, (October, 1975), p. 322.

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1867 A.D.[2] (20 Poh 1923 Bikrami) in Bhasaur situated in Patiala State in those days. He was born of Mata Jiun Kaur and his father was Subedar Sudh Singh. His birth rites were performed by Baba Fateh Singh who taught Panjabi to the child later, who was named as Narain Singh. When his father came from military service of the Patiala State, the later went to Rorewal village for managing the farming of his friend Sardar Dewa Singh, President, Council of Regency. The child got his initial education from the Dera of Fateh Singh Nihang and then in the village school. Then for sometime Narain Singh went to his father for education in Rorewal and passed 3rd standard of Persian there. Then with the suggestion of S.Dewa Singh he was sent to Patiala in City High School and he passed middle there.

As he was fond of becoming Babu he learned English alongwith Panjabi and Persian. His father expired in 1881 when the son was only of 15 years leaving all responsibilities upon the young boy. He was compelled to leave his studies and sent in Army with the help of S. Dewa Singh as Hawaldar. Since he was less interested in military service he continued his studies of Overseer courses during his service and passed this examination in Rurki in 1885. He left his previous service and joined as Overseer in canal department of Patiala State.[2]

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1. Shamsher Singh Ashok, Panth Rattan Babu Teja Singh in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23 (April 1964), p.10-11.

2. Giani Harbhajan Singh, Personal Interview.

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Now he was called Babu and was married twice one after the other with Bibi Nand Kaur and then with Bibi Pardhan Kaur from Peshawar. The first wife bore him three sons, Giani Man Singh, Dharam Singh and Giani Harbhajan Singh who has recently expired in March 1979. And the second wife gave him Dr. Ran Singh who wrote 'Dasam Guru Girah Parkash'.[1]

As Sub-overseer Narain Singh worked in Canal Department at Sada Singh Wala, Lad Banjara, Bhatinda, Kot Bakhat, Dial Pura, Narwana, Chhat Banur, etc. He never accepted bribe during his service career from 1886 A.D. as Sub-overseer to S.D.O. rank. He remained fully loyal and honest to his post.[2] He inherited from Giani Dit Singh and Gurmukh Singh etc. a keen love for Sikhism and he started spending on the preaching of Khalsa religion one tenth of his salary (Daswandh). He would go to the preaching tours with Patiala Singh Sabha workers during his spare time and holidays. He proceeded on three months leave and started journey on foot to Nandery[3] in the South. There he received baptism and was renamed as Teja Singh, from his family name Narain Singh. He became Teja Singh which presented many difficulties,[4] in his official signatures in Government's records

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1. Ibid.

2. Giani Harbhajan Singh "Tum Sahib Haon Kinkar Bara", Unpublished manuscript.

3. The place where 10th Guru was cremated is also called Hazur Sahib situated on the bank of DGodawari,now in Maharashtra.

4. Shamsher Singh Ashok, "Babu Teja Singh" in Gurmat Rahini, (Dec. 1973), p. 34.

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Teja Singh got inspiration from Singh Sabha Patiala and with the help of Bhagwan Singh and Sujan Singh a Mir Munshi in Patiala State he led a Jatha of 5 Sikhs to Bhasaur in 1893 A.D. and established Singh Sabha Bhasaur on 13th of Chetar, 1950, Bikarmi, 1894 A.D.[1] This sabha was the first organ of the Bhasaur Movement.

After successful leadership in Singh Sabha Bhasaur there ushered an era of glooms in his life. His mother died a sudden death and then his wife Pardhan Kaur too left him for heavenly abode. Both these ladies were source of happiness in his life, but he bore this unbearable shock patiently. After Pardhan Kaur's death he was married to Mahitab Kaur for his 3rd marriage. She bore him four sons (Dr) Mit Singh, Randhir Singh, Ranbir Singh and Tejwant Singh.

Teja Singh's heart was full with limitless love for the service of Panth and he gave dynamic leadership to Bhasaur Singh Sabha. He possessed a fertile mind and was an untiring campaigner. By his stern resoluteness and limitless capacity for innovation he brought to the Singh Sabha renaissance a new verve and thurst. He was a puritan of the extremist kind and a fundamentalist in the interpretation of Sikh principles and traditions. He challenged much of the prevelent Sikh usages.[2]

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1. Giani Harbhajan Singh, op.cit., p. 2. The Singh Sabha Bhasaur was established in 1894 A.D.
2. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p. 322.

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He inherited the dedication to the Sikh principles from Bhai Wasawa Singh who had given his income for the propagation work of the Sabha Serving the Panth for fourteen years. Teja Singh got religious dedication in the company of Amritsar and Lahore Singh Sabha leaders. He was a potent force in Singh Sabha and he ranked among the most vital figures. He was universally admired for his energy and dedication. He enjoyed the confidence of the founders of the movement such as Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Jawahir Singh and Giani Dit Singh. They participated in the Diwans at Bhasaur as did other prominent Sikhs including Sant Attar Singh of Mastuana, Kahan Singh of Nabha, Chanda Singh Vakil of Ferozepur, Bhai Takhat Singh, Pt. Kartar Singh of Dakha (Ludhiana District), Giani Sher Singh and Akali Kaur Singh (Kashmir), Bhai Randhir Singh, Master Mota Singh and Sant Teja Singh of Gujranwala worked in the schools at Bhasaur. As has mentioned previously, when the Chief Khalsa Dewan was established in 1902, Babu Teja Singh was called upon to read the inaugural prayer (Ardas).[1]

Teja Singh was accompanying the workers of Lahore and Amritsar Khalsa Diwans to attend religious functions in all places to propagate Guru Gobind Singh's mission among masses and teaching them to shed touchability, empty rituals etc. His dedication compelled him to resign his post as a suboverseer. But his son Giani Harbhajan Singh (now dead) told me that he left service as S.D.O. of Irrigation Department of Patiala State.

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1. Singh Sabha Bhasaur, Veer Sudhar Patar, p. 33-34.

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Missionary Work of Singh Sabha, Bhasaur:

This Sabha rendered great service in baptising all beings in accordance with the wishes of the 10th Guru and to practice particular principles accepting the conditions. "If you want to play love, come with thy head on thy palm". Reputed leaders of the Sikh community alongwith their families got baptism from this place. Devotees from all parts of India and abroad attended its annual meetings from seven to eight thousands in numbers. In those Diwans resolutions, (Gurmatas) were proposed and passed by universal acceptance of all present for the Panthic welfare and were preached in the entire Panth.[1]

The Service of initiating low castes as to bring them into the folds of Sikh Panth at par with other high castes, fell almost in the share of Singh Sabha Bhasaur. It levelled all caste barriers. A Shudhi Sabha had been established by Dr. Jai Singh in Lahore on 17th of April 1893 with the object of reclaiming those Sikhs and Hindus who had apostalized themselves by contracting alliances with Muslim men or women.[2] But Bhasaur Sabha cavilled at the limited objective of the Shudhi Sabha and questioned its very designation, which it said was only an imitation of the Arya Samaj vocabulary.[3] From its very inception

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1. Brahm Singh, op.cit., p. 52.
2. Jagjit Singh, Singh Sabha Lehir, p. 50. (illegible).
3. Lal Singh, Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan Sambandhi Suchnavan, 1967, p. 146.

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it had accepted for conversion Muslims and those from lower Hindu castes. In the first year's Diwan in 1894, 13 Jats, 6 Jheavars (Water carriers), 2 barbers, one Khatri and one Musalman (Miran Baksh who became Nihal Singh) were initiated into the Sikh faith.[1] Teja Singh himself mentioned in a note that the Bhasaur Singh Sabha administered the Gurmantra and holy Amrita to a Muslim layd and ushered her into Sodhbans renaming her as Kishan Kaur. A Sikh who had fallen by living with a Muslim lady was baptised and renamed as Ude Singh.

But the famous conversion ceremony that gave new importance to Bhasaur movement was a diwan held at Bakapur two miles from Phillaur in Jullundur District, Punjab, became Sikh convention. On June 13 and 14, 1903 Karim Baksh a Muslim and his family of 4 sons and one daughter were converted into Sikhism. In all 35 persons received baptism, following morning. Maulvi Karim Baksh was named Lakhbir Singh. His sons became Matab Singh, Kirpal Singh, Harnam Singh, Gurbax Singh and daughter became Waryam Kaur.

This famous Diwan was attended by the people from all places, Baba Hira Singh of Majithia led a Jatha from Khalsa College Amritsar including the students, Bhai Jodh Singh, Tara Singh and Man Singh. This Diwan marked a high point in Singh Sabha resurgence. It was a visible statement of the new urges which moved the Sikh community at that time. A sweeping

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1. Ajmer Singh, "Panch Khalsa Diwan," in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Babu Teja Singh Number, Sept.- Oct., 1951, p. 12.

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religious fervour, a new sense of identity and unity and a decisive breach with the recent past dominated by customs and practices contrary to the Guru's teachings, were the characteristics of contemporary Sikhism. And those were dramatically high lighted at Bakapur. For ~~t~~ Teja Singh this Diwan was a great personal triumph.[1]

Teja Singh was a man of simple habits. He wore Khadi 'kurta'. His coat and turban were of coarse blanket. ~~But~~ He was not forerunner of Swadeshi but a link between Baba Ram Singh Namdhari's and Gandhi's swadeshi calls. In appearance he would remain simple having 'khadi kurta' and 'payjama' in summer and a coat and 'payjama' in the winter season with a 'vasket'. His head befitted round turban and a round steel wheel around it. In his neck he would hang one sword of 3 feet blade and another of 9" or 1" blade. In correspondence he would like to be called Khalsa keet or Khalsa kinkar (stone). Staunch believer in Sikh valves he wrote once 'Narain Singh went to Hazur Sahib and died, and Teja Singh is born from here.'

In the field of social uplift of Sikhs and women folk his work was important. Before 1905 women were given baptism of a double dagger, a right denied to them so far. Women education was his burning zeal and he started Widya Bhandar and

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1. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p. 326.

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later on Khalsa Kuari College at Panch Khand.[1] Girls were given free education with free boarding and lodging facilities. Humbleness was his article of faith and he would lift right soil of girl students on his shoulders.[2]

Like an eveready Sikh he would rise at 2 A.M. and after bath he would start Simran. For the whole life he would sit before Guru Granth to do all works and writings placing a small desk before him.[3]

Nevertheless, like all progressive reformers the workers of Bhasaur Movement in that orthodox and caste ridden society had to face bitter opposition. Its workers were teased and harassed by the ignorant villagers. They were called with all types of detected names of 'Chuhras' and 'Chamars' etc. Complaints were lodged with the Sikh rulers and Brahmins and Popes got ample opportunities to excite high and low to brand the dedicated workers as "Chuhar Sabhias" etc. Many times the s imple villagers were compelled to bathe in Ganges to become purified. Efforts were made to cut all relations of the workers from their relatives and friends. They were harrassed with all types of ex-communications.[4]

But the selfless and fearless reformers practising already the golden rule - so long as the Khalsa remains distinct-

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1. This was the new name assigned to the place of Headquarter of Singh Sabha Bhasaur which became Panch Khalsa Diwan, namely Khalsa Parliament in 1907.
2. Amar Singh Dosanjh "Panth Rattan Babu Teja Singh Ji Panch Khad Bhasaur " in Khalsa Parlaiment Gazettee, Vol.23, p.1.
3. Giani Harbhajan Singh, Personal Interview.
4. Brahm Singh, op.cit., p. 52.

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had changed to the eveready principle of 'the common kitchen of Sikh Sangat'. With this principle charished by the 10th Guru, the Bhasaur Singh Sabha, that was beyond the influence of any class of caste pride or any group of lose Sikhs (Dhillar Sikhs) proved as bed rock.

Singh Sabha Bhasaur received undivided help and support from the Panthic banefactors like Giani Dit Singh, who preached in his tours in Malwa Region. Bhasaur Sabha distributed in thousands its books 'Nakli Sikh Prabodh'. Babu Rajinder Singh, editor 'Lyall Khalsa Gazettee' many times attended Diwan at Bhasaur and preached its principles at many places.

This Singh Sabha had its impact inside and outside India. From all corners, Malwa, Majha, Doaba, Pothohar, Sindh etc.[1] devotees would gather there. In those days Khalsa Army took keen interest and Ragi Parties took special pains to initiate persons according to the regulations of Bhasaur Singh Sabha.[2] Such were the manifold activities of this Sabha that Bhasaur became the centre of a powerful movement, characterized by social and religious uplift of the low castes and female education, Sikh missionary zeal etc. Hence it began to be called as Bhasaur Movement. Later on the Singh Sabha Bhasaur was transformed into 'Panch Khalsa Diwan' or 'Khalsa Parliament' in 1907.

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1. Malwa - Cis sutlej Area; Majha - Trans-sutlej area of Gurdaspur, Amritsar District beyond Beas; Doaba - Area between Beas and Sutlej rivers; Pothohar - Ralwalpindi region.

2. Brahm Singh, op.cit., p. 52.

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CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION OF PANCH KHALSA DIWAN

After the establishment of Chief Khalsa Diwan in 1901 estrangement developed due to some principles. Chief Khalsa Diwan consisted of rich people, elite among illiterate masses, moderate and conservative in reforms. On the other side Teja Singh group desired radical reforms and challenged much of the prevalent Sikh usage. Moreover for the Malwa association of poor Sikh peasants and workers, such Diwan was essential in their area.

Since Sunder Singh did not agree with those radical changes, the Diwan leaders condemned Bhasaur group as fanatics and rebels. So they were compelled to separate themselves from the parent body. They organized a new Diwan known as Panch Khalsa Diwan,[1] namely, Khalsa Parliament under the guidance of its Secretary, Teja Singh in 1907. He converted the Sabha of a small village into a centre of militancy and led his associates into ideological combat with Hindus, other Sikhs and even rulers of princely states, since he was obsessed with the revitalization of the Sikh religion.[2]

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1. It was based on the democratic principle as Guru Nanak said in 'Japji' - 'Panch Parvan, Panch Pardhan'. 'Panch' were to be elected and made supreme body like British Parliament Supreme body of the Khalsa to execute the work, though in religious sphere was a new experiment in those autocratic and bureaucratic set up.

2. N. Gerald Barrier, The Sikhs and their Literature, pp. XXVI-XXVII.

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On the Baisakhi Day of 1907 Teja Singh set up the Panch Khalsa Diwan or Khalsa Parliament[1] at Bhasaur under sanction of a Sikh synod held at Damdama Sahib on April 13, 1907. Panch Khalsa Diwan was meant Khalsa Parliament. Parliament is supreme political body that runs the government, just like British Parliament. Thus he gave the idea of Panchavati rule under democratic set up.

A special constitution was framed containing laws and byelaws, aims, objectives and execution of all types of duties by its office bearers.[2]

Bhasaur became the centre for Teja Singh's universe and in 1913 he took retirement from his service to dedicate his life for Bhasaur mission. As Chief Khalsa Diwan had prepared its 'Gurmat Parkash ~~Bhag~~ Sanskar' ('Bhag') (1910-15), Teja Singh prepared 'Khalsa Rahit Parkash' for the performance of all duties and ethics. Khalsa Rahit Parkash was prepared on the decisions passed in the diwans of Damdama Sahib in 1908, which became 'the Magna Carta' of the Bhasaur Movement.

To bring enlightenment in illiterate villagers he started educational institutions. He opened two Widya Bhandars for boys and girls.[3] Boys school was closed after

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1. See chapter VII.

2. See Chapter V.

3. Shamsher Singh Ashok, "Babu Teja Singh Ji" in Gurmat Rahini, (Dec. 1973), p. 35. But generally it is believed that there was only one co-educational school. Later on boys school was shifted to village and Vidya Bhandar at Panch Khand was made girls' school.

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sometime but girls school continued for middle and Gyani classes. Girls were given free education and were to wear five symbols and turban. This school was shifted from village to Panch Khand, the centre of Panch Khalsa Diwan on a nearby mount. And at Panch Khand Widya Bhandar and Panch Khalsa Diwan worked a lot to do away with wrong traditions and 'Manmat' among the masses. In 1920 that school ended due to financial stringency.

After sometimes Teja Singh was married to Bibi Niranjan Kaur[1], the force to inspire for opening Khalsa Quari College in 1927. She was student of Widya Bhandar and passed middle and Gyani there. She dedicated her life for the service of women folk in educational field and opened Khalsa Quari College. On 3rd Kartik 1978 B. (1922 A.D.), Teja Singh's marriage with his student gave excuse to the rivals, already annoyed people, to oppose the Diwan. They placed many hurdles before reformation work. But he proved fearless and all storms subsided within a short span of time. That college proved a great success. But after Babu's death it had to face monetary problems in 1942. But again it was revived in 1947 for sometime only.

In 1927 Khalsa Quari College printed five volumes of Gurmukhi course, for breaking the long lines of Guru Granth in words called ' Pad Shed'. Prior to this the Diwan had published 'Gur Manter Parbodh' for the controversial decision of 'Wahuguru' instead of Wahiguru'. This led to the opposition of Teja Singh by the traditional Sikhs. From 1930 to 1932

1. Wisakha Singh, Malwa Itihas, Vol. 2., n.d, pp. 273-74.
It was his second marriage.

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Babu was busy in completing 'Bhatt Girah Parbodh', a harsh commentary on the Bhatt's writings in Guru Granth. Babu aimed at publishing 'Hazuri Bir', but many impediments stood in his ambition. The death of his son Dr. Ran Singh in 1931 robbed him of concerted efforts and both the works remained unprinted due to financial difficulties.[1]

He was not only a religious preacher but a writer and journalist too. His Panjabi prose was impressive and forceful, having words from Hindi, Urdu and Persian. In poetry he was problamatist, fond of putting problems and sorting them out, which is called 'Samasia Purti' in Panjabi literature. In 1932 when he was writing commentary on Bhatt's writings he would take some problems and get them solved for the examination of poetry.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 36.

2. Ibid., p. 37. One such problem was 'Jhatua' and for instance his three lines may be mentioned here :

   Charan Kamal Hirde Gahe Nanak, Bhae Sagar Utrahe tu Jhatua.
   Charan Kamal Hirde Gahe Nanak, Bhae Sagar Hoe Paar tu Jhatua.
   Charan Kamal Hirde Gahe Nanak, Bhae Sagar Hohe Paar tu Jhatua.

   whether the solution of this problem meant for the contrast of Bhatt bani with other simple poets' or some thing else it was better known to the author himself.

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His undivided dedication to the research of Gurbani and Sikh History led him to overtake the research of Gurmat literature and history, whenever a new theory he faced. In reality personal views and criticism hed become part and parcel of his nature. He was called invincible in lecturing and writing.

He wrote and edited more than one dozen books. Khalsa Rahit Parkash, 1907, Gurmata Parkash, 2nd ed. 1929, Samihauta Parkash, Milgobha Sudhar, 1920, Khalsa Panch Tantar, 1921, Niti Sar, 1935, Budh Parkash, Gurmantar Parbodh, 1925, Bhatt Girah Parbodh, etc. are his main publications. Panch Khalsa Diwan started seven periodical. 'Khalsa Parliament Gazette' was started in 1925 which remained in publication till the last decade.

Teja Singhissaid to be brave not only in brain but in physique also. He would pass two or three days and nights without meals and water. So long as the 'Gurmata' proposed in the Diwan was not universally accepted the food distribution was never started. Unstinted preaching of Guru's Word was the ideal of his life and he would not tolerate any relaxation in Sikh way of life told by the Tenth Guru. He resigned from his service and wrote in 1913 a letter to his family about his resolve to dedicate his whole life only for Guru's mission. He expressed that he was more concerned with community service than his family and asked his sons to consider him as dead.[1]

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1. Giani Harbhajan Singh's signed statement.

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Besides the gathering on Sankrant of every month there was an annual Diwan for 5 days in the middle of March every year. All devotees would attend this Diwan. At 4 A.M. 'Aasa di War' was sung, then followed the 'Katha'[1] of 'Hukmi Shabad'. After that proceedings of the Diwan started with 'Gurmatas' and discussion would follow for hours. When a decision was resolved universally ,instead of majority, there was 'Jaikara'(slogan) to fix stamp to the acceptance of that proposal or decision. Evening prayers of 'Rahiras' were never disrupted though many a time discussions would not end till night or evening.

There was no special treatment for high and rich, all were equals. The persons who went astray were fined upto five hundred rupees. They were to draw lines with nose, faces were blackened, grinding, and cutting of grass were ordered as fine. But no offender grumbled.

To sum up one can count the services and achievements of Panch Khalsa Diwan as the following:

'Amrit' of double daggar was started to be given to both sexes, as has mentioned earlier, previously women were given only the Amrit prepared by one edged sword. Baptism was performed

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1. It is strange enough that while the Sikhs coined words for every ceremony, they adopted "Katha" word of Brahamanical and Sanatani rituals, and that word is still in vogue.

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without any caste distinction which was still prevalent in Amritsar Diwan as the low caste people were forbidden to enter Darbar Sahib Amritsar and Fateh Garh Sahib etc.[1]

The Diwan was the panorama of various Gurmat Rahit Maryadas which were adopted by universal acceptance. Damdama Sahib was accepted as 5th seat of the Khalsa, as there were only 4 takhats accepted by Chief Khalsa Diwan in those days.[2]

For women uplift free education was imparted and they were to wear Kirpan and turben as has already been mentioned. Temporal gurudom, worship of tomb, empty rituals, purdah etc. were prohibited. Ornaments were prohibited strictly and a special book 'Gahina Parhar' was published for this injunction by Principal Niranjan Kaur in 1926.

For the promotion of Punjabi language religious literature, 'Nitnem', 'Kirtan parkash', 'Gurgian Parkash', etc. small 'Gutkas' were distributed free of cost. The Diwan did much to convince the Maharaja of Patiala to give to Punjabi the status of court language and state language. It also wrote to S.G.P.C. for making Panjabi the language of its records. Babu Ji was strict about Sikh code of conduct and never hesitated in criticising any perverted man. Once he

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1. Giani Harbhajan Singh, 'Sunia te pekhia', unpublished manuscript. On 28th Oct. 1910 low caste converts were not allowed to enter in Golden Temple.

2. Amritsar, Patna, Hazur Sahib and Anandpur.

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went to attend the Dushehra ⊠ Diwan of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala State at Chail. When Maharaja extended his hands to get 'Parshad' of five beloveds, Teja Singh ignored him considering the Maharaja as perverted Sikh. The rivals excited Maharaja against Teja Singh who was to forefeit a grant of two lack for his school that the Maharaja had promised.[1]

In 1917-18 there came the controversy of 'Rag Mala' which was considered as extrapolation by Panch Khalsa Diwan. Two rival groups started verbal and newspaper combat. Chief Khalsa Diwan opposed the exclusion of Rag Mala. But Panch Khalsa Diwan by a Gurmata started the publications of Granth without Ragmala by Panch Khalsa Diwan. Giani Sher Singh and Master Mota Singh wrote 'Ragmala Khandan' and 'Hasur Ragmala'.

Relations with the Government:

Another controversy rose on the use of 'Parliament'. British Government developed apprehensions and recommended Maharaja of Patiala to put pressure to close this Parliament. So the Maharaja put his political pressure to end the use of this word. When Teja Singh refused 5 lack rupees as bribe to stop this use, he was warned on 5th June 1912 by an order from Patiala Ijlas-i-Khas.[2]

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1. Romesh Walia, Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab States, p. 21. Teja Singh refused the request of Maharaja to supply girls from Widya Bhandar and Maharaja became his enemy.

2. Lal Singh, Ed. Amolak Amar Phul, pp. 21-22.

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Teja Singh had already been warned to desist from the use of the name 'Khalsa Parliament' but he had not paid any heed to these instructions. Therefore he was further ordered that he should desist from the use of this word henceforth.

Teja Singh was alleged for having started disturbing the setting of hymns in Adi Granth. He changed the traditional 'Sikh Ardas' of supplication.[1] He jettisoned the preamble most of which is derived from Chandi di War of Tenth Guru. He advocated the expunging of Ragmala[2] from the Granth and considered Bhat's creations as 'Kachi Bani'. At Bakapur Diwan he is alleged to have capriciously altered from the original -

"Guru Simar Manai Kalka"

in to

"Gur Simar Manaya Kal ko",

giving the explanation that the original line presented the Guru as a worshipper of the goddess which he was not in reality. From his Panjabi courses he deleted the Swayaiyas of Bhatts and added some of Gobind Singh's compositions.

When he started printing of Guru Granth in 'Pad Shed' without Ragmala, a widespread protest ensued and

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1. Harbans Singh, "Bakapur Diwan and Babu Teja Singh of Bhatinda" in the Punjab Past and Present, Vol. VII, April, 1973, p. 328-29.

2. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkash, p. 96.

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Maharaja Patiala was again approached to use his official pressure who came with his notice dated June 5,1918.[1] That notice meant that Teja Singh should distribute copies of Ragmala after publishing them and should abondon the use of 'Khalsa Parliament'.

Teja Singh replied on 2nd Bhadon 1973 (20 August, 1918) that he was ready to accept any treatment given by the 'Patleshwar' (Maharaja). Maharaja dared not the arrest of Teja Singh who was ready to lay down his life for Panthic cause.

His organization crossed Indian limits and became popular in Kualalumpur, Hongkong and Narobi.[2]

In 1920 he sent literature in the army for propogation of Panch Khalsa Diwan. When some Sikh soldiers were teased by British Government for keeping beard untied and wearing of Kirpan, Teja Singh helped them to face all odds. In Ist World War steel halmet was imposed for Sikhs. Government had to pass law to allow turban. Government was compelled to write to Patiala ruler that he should try to decrease the influence of Khalsa Parliament which had become influential in Sikh armies of the British Government.

He was to reopen the unending controversy of Sikh history that contained illusions about the birth of Nanak Dev.

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1. Panjab Past and Present, Vol. IX, p. 328.
2. See Appendix C.

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He tried to solve this problem by examples to prove that the Guru was born in Baisakh instead of Kartik.[1] But like other scholars his findings fell flat on the ears of traditional society and religious leaders that persists even in this age of advanced research and free thinking.

Though he was not a politician, yet he was not ignorant of his surroundings. Panch Khalsa Diwan passed Gurmatas in every Annual Diwans of 1918, 1919 and 1920 that the Sikhs should be given the control and management of the Sikh Gurdwaras. There remains less doubt that the priestly class too joined hands to poison the Maharaja and Chief Khalsa Diwan against this movement of Bhasaur.[2]

Through a Gurmata the Maharaja of Patiala was recommended and requested to appoint a Sikh Chief Minister in his Sikh State instead of Pandit Dia Kishan Kaul. The Pandit is alleged to be the spirit behind the attack of 'Nirbhai Akali Dal' from Sahore on Panch Khand on 24th Kartik in 1921 A.D.[3] Along with this the Chief Minister ordered to control the library and treasury of Panch Khand and a guard was placed there, that stayed there for twelve years.[4]

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2. ~~Lal~~ Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan De Note" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23 (June 1964), p.15.

1. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, pp. 55-56. Bhai Gurdas used 'Wisoa' word that depicts Baisakh. The Tenth Guru established Khalsa on Baisakhi; Why? The answer may be on the birth day? Nanak.

3. ~~Lal Singh, op.cit., p.15. He went on fast for 5 days.~~ Giani Harbhajan Singh, A signed Statement.

4. Khalsa Parlaiment Gazettee, Vol.XV, (May-July,1956),p.105.

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In December 1921, Teja Singh was arrested from Panch Khand and kept in Kotwali of Patiala. He did not touch food and water for three days[1] since his kirpan was separated from his body. A deputation[2] of leading Sikhs from Malaya waited upon the Maharaja and got the release order of Teja Singh and his associates.

Now came the turn of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee to oppose Babu Teja Singh and Bhasaur Movement. A motion adopted by the Panch Khalsa Diwan had already disclaimed the Sahajdhari sect of the Sikhs. In 1928 a resolution of Panch Khalsa Diwan had declared Chief Khalsa Diwan Amritsar to be a body of men un form of conviction. Bhai Vir Singh a scholar of repute was laid under penalty for his secret propagation of the cult of personal deification.[3] In 1921 exceptions had been taken to Sikhs seeking advice of Non-Sikh leaders in their religious matters. Akalis were quoted being in touch with Mahatama Gandhi in Nankana Sahib Morcha.[4] But a letter addressed to Teja Singh from Shiromani Akali Dal[5] to invite scholars for Panthik organization for a meeting of 4th January, 1926 bears testimony that in the beginning Panch khalsa Diwan enjoyed the good relations with Akali Dal.

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1. Lal Singh, op.cit., p. 15. He went on fast for 5 days.
2. Khalsa Parliament Gazette, Vol. XV,(May-July 1956),p.105.
3. Lal Singh, Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan Sambandhi Suchnawan, 1967, p. 145.
4. Ibid.
5. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazette, Vol. 25 (Sept. 1964), pp. 12-13.

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When all forces combined against Panch Khalsa, it was not beyond prediction that the end of the movement was not far away. On April 25, 1928 Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha and Teja Singh received 'Death Notice' from the 'Dushat Dokhian Pakar Pachhar Dal'[1], accusing them for creating mischiefs in 'Gurmat'.

Teja Singh was ready for this treatment and remained fearless. Finally he was ex-communicated by an edict of Shri Akal Takhat Amritsar by S.G.P.C. on July 10, 1928. And on August 9, 1928 by a Hukamnama the publications of Panch Khalsa Diwan, Bhasaur were considered anti-Sikh proceedings.

Hence Babu Teja Singh and Bibi Niranjan Kaur were excommunicated from the 'Panth'. Other members of the Panch Khalsa Diwan were also debarred for having 'Ardas' offered at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib or any other Gurdwara.[2]

But Teja Singh never felt depressed and remained busy in his dedication. As compared to the present leaders, he was blameless and never misused public funds for personal ~~gin~~ gains. His son Harbhajan Singh told me that he never gave any help after retirement to his sons and the family had to stand on its own legs, which presented many critical problems and difficulties.[3] The accounts of the Diwan, School

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1. Lal Singh, Amolak Amar Phul, p. 33.
2. Harbans Singh, "The Bakapur Diwan and Babu Teja Singh of Bhasau in Panjab Past and Present Vol. IX (Oct. 1976), p. 329.
3. Harbhajan Singh's personal interview.

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and college were verified many times but no discrepency was found. Though his family had to face hardships but he went on smoothly on his path of Panthic Welfare.

But inspite of all with the passage of time " he fell victim to his own creative genius and innovatory intellect". He is said to have started departing from the main stream of Sikh life.[1] He made Bhasaur, a centre of his own universe. In that seclusion he adopted an uncommon way, full of unconstitutional and controversial decisions. Fierce polemics surrounded him. But he remained undaunted due to his unabated energy and his fanatic zeal. But it was clear that he was on the path of estrangement.[2] It is said that against all evidence and authority Teja Singh replaced the Sikh term 'Wahiguru' with 'Wahugu'. 'Mahaparshad' was substituted for 'Karah Parshad'. He is said to have repudiated the Sikh code prepared by the Chief Khalsa Diwan.[3] He propagated the use of Sikh Calender, Nanakshahi Samvat. He introduced his own titles and alienated Sahajdhari group. Alterations made in structure of prayer, setting of writings and creations are supposed to be distortions. He depricated the use of English denominations yet he adopted the high sounding designation of 'Khalsa Parliament' for his Diwan. Another self contradiction was brought out by Gian Singh historian. When Teja Singh on closing

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1. Harbans Singh, "Singh Sabha Lahir de Samen di Mahan Ghatna Baka Pur Diwan ate Babu Teja Singh Bhasaur" in Singh Sabha Patrika, July 1975, p. 12.
2. Harbans Singh, op. cit., p. 326.
3. Ibid.

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of his school wore black dress and covered the holy book in black. He writes:

> "When the girl school had to close down,
> He resigned all his Sikh principles,
> Guru Granth which annuls all sorrow,
> Which enjoins us to take grief and happiness equally,
> He laid upon its coverlets black,
> Repudiating the teaching of his faith".[1]

But Teja Singh was unrepetant. He is said to have been ceased to be the force he used to be. Once he ranked among the vital figures and enjoyed the confidence of great leaders. But all this had become the days of past. His military and dogmatism inevitably led to alienation. He lacked the previous spiritual strength. All his creativities and devotions, which won admiration for him seemed to as if those had been changed. "His fanaticism and extremism decidedly reached upto madness". And the gulf he had created between himself and his own community remained un-bridged.[2]

But his contribution to Sikh community cannot be underestimated. It would prove misleading to call him fanatic and extremist. 'Unstinting propagation of Guru's word' was the ideal of his life and for that he left his service and family. It is said that after his prayer of life dedication he never went to his home and remained busy day and night for

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1. Giani Gian Singh, Ripudaman Parkash, p. 35.
2. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p. 330.

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the selfless service of Panch Khalsa Diwan.[1] His works for women uplift and education were model for others and Maharaja and leaders would come to see this school to copy in their own schools, Bhujangan School Kairon and Bhujangana School Jasplon and Sidhwan Ashrams. In all schools there was the beginning of turban for girls.

Again the 'Shudhi' of Bhasaur movement proved to be a model achievement. Bakapur Diwan was a supreme example of the missionary work of Panch Khalsa Diwan. His achievement in the field of conversion of the lower caste cannot be under-estimated.

Like a steel man he could not sacrifice his ideal for worldly gains. He would not tolerate any relaxation in Sikh code of conduct. He endeavoured for the quality and quantities (number) of Sikhs but would not tolerate even his God if He were to become perverted in religion.

He believed in partyless democracy, therefore, he would like 'Gurmata', universal acceptance. He tried to simplify the all ceremonies of the Sikhs from birth to death. And for this purpose 'Khalsa Rahit Parkash' was prepared and published.

He was an embodiment of humbleness and would not feel provocation even in the heat of discussion and opposition.

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1. Harbhajan Singh, Personal Interview.

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He was embodiment of calmness and endurance. Once his eleven year old son, Shamsher Singh was murdered by his rivals and he was theman who did not report to the police, accepting the sweet will of God.

As a leader and staunch reformer he started religious war (Zihad) against priestly orthodox class like Martin Luther, a German Priest ,and created a Protestant class in Sikh religion in the shape of Panch Khalsa Diwan. Like Martin Luther, who burnt all warnings of the rivals, to murder him, in public, Teja Singh too accepted death note of 25.4.1928 of his enemies in public, and remained unprovoked and balanced.[1]

The Chief Khalsa Diwan was annoyed over the printing of 'Pad Shed' of Adi Granth. This 'Pad chhed' was a mere excuse and the reasons may be far deep and due to political expediences. Pad Wand Committee was established which included Bhai Vir Singh, Sant Gurbax Singh, Daswandhi Committee Patiala, Giani Sher Singh, S. Man Singh Waqeel, Giani Thakur Singh, Diwan Lila Ram, Pandit Ram Singh Doaba, Professor Jodh Singh, Sardar Sewa Ram, Giani Gurbax Singh Barister, S. Kahn Singh Nabha and Babu Teja Singh. Those included had some reluctant scholars too. In the long run it was unanimously decided to print and publish the 'Bir' and for this five thousand rupees were collected. Printing

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1. Lal Singh, Amolak Amar Phul, p. 33.

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started in Gurmat Press Amritsar but "Anti-gurmat" people stopped its printing by force beyond Rag Gauri.[1] But 'Pad Chhed Bir' started only one decade after the death of Babu Teja Singh with the efforts of the then opposing body, S.G.P.C. itself. Then Teja Singh cannot be blamced for a task which was ment to make easier the reading of Granth without any hindrance.

He left Panch Khalsa Diwan fully progressing and it was not his fault if the Diwan lacked leadership of his calibre. One may trace various causes of the opposition of Panch Khalsa Diwan by the governments.

The British intelligence department developed apprehension due to the popularity of Panch Khalsa Diwan among the military men of Indian Army. Patiala Government was approached time and again to close Khalsa Parliament. He gave new models to his age and possessed the qualities of a great man to certain extent. His reforms were fully effective though lasted only for a short period. Perhaps he was much forward to his age and times were not suitable to his new experiments; and because he enjoyed the support of only lower strate of people. When ruling king and his Wazir, priestly class, and main religious body S.G.P.C.

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1. Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23 (June 1964), p. 4.

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were pitched against this movement its future could not be unpredictable.

Equally he cannot be blamed much for marrying his own student who had taken consent of her parents. But it was certainly considered a weakness of the great leader of his followers in that orthodox age and Indian society.

His simple aim of life remained to save the Guru's principles from the undue impressions of 'Manmat' (unsikhism) and to bring them in his own practical life for presentation before Sikh masses. To frustrate and uncover the pretentions of pretenders and to give satirical answers to raw and perverted leaders were the main columns of his life. Martin Luther struggled against Popes and preaching of pure Bible, he advocated. Christians acknowledged his revised Bible as 'New Testament'. That instance helps us to expect that like Martin Luther, Teja Singh's reformatory works would prove successful sometime, and those has been acknowledged to some extent.

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CHAPTER V

OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES AND REFORMS OF PANCH KHALSA DIWAN, BHASAUR

There is no speculative thesis elaborated in Guru Granth Sahib, nor any codified principles or laws of behaviour.[1] But the Panch Khalsa Diwan established on the Baisakhi day of 1907 at Bhasaur, had its elaborative constitution prescribing its aims and objectives, various qualifications of its office bearers and preachers.

(A) Five Principles of Panch Khalsa Diwan

The Panch Khalsa Diwan was to achieve certain objectives through five fundamental principles:[2]

1. For all kinds of worldly and spiritual attainments having undivided confidence only in - Ek Oankar Satnam Karta Purakh Nirbhahu Nirwair Akal Murat Ajuni Saibhang Gur Parshad.[3] Propagation and practization of Guru Granth, one embodiment of the practical and sacred sayings of the Ten Gurus.

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1. Harbans Singh, in Foreword of Ethics of the Sikhs by Avtar Singh.

2. Babu Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, p. 114.

3. (i)Gurbachan Singh Talib, Selections from Holy Granth, p.15. This mul mantra means;—In the name of the One Indivisible Supreme Being, Eternal Reality, Creator Purusha, without fear, without rancour Timeless Form, Unborn Self-existent, realized through Divine grace.
(ii) Pritam Singh Gill, Trinity of Sikhism, p. 65. 'I, Transcendal Immanent, Truth, Numenon Creator, Spirit, Non Thesis, Non-antithesis, Beyond time, Model Unborn, Self-expression, Light Gracious'.

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2. To practise the 'Khalsa' codes according to 'Khalsa Rahit Parkash'[1] and for the assimilation into the Khalsa religion, acceptance of baptism and baptization of other. Wearing of 5 symbols[2] to avoid five evils.[3] To establish mutual relations within the 'Khalsa Panth' by considering the Khalsa religion conspicuous among all Vedic and Scriptual religions. And to act upon Guru's injunctions from birth to death.

3. To preach 'Khalsa' religion in all countries and assimilation of mankind in the 'Khalsa Panth' through baptism. And to make the people conscious for the help of their own judicial and patronizing government like their parents.

4. Learning and teaching of all worldly education and especially Gurmukhi. And enriching of Gurmukhi education with all branches of knowledge.

5. To contribute and spend one tenth of honestly earned wealth for the benefit and welfare of mankind particularly for the progess of the 'Khalsa Panth'.

Again the mission aimed at the propagation of 'Gurmat' and supression of 'Manmat' by joining every religious gathering of the Panth for the removal of every religious and

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1. Details of the Gurmatas adopted in 1908 for Khalsa Rahit Parkash are written in other books also. (i) Gurmata Parkash (ii) Ragmala Darpan (iii) Milgobha Sudhar (iv) Bhajauti Parbodh.

2. Comb, steel bangle, trousers above knee, sword and long hairs.

3. Kam-Lust, Karodh-violence, Lobh-Avrice Moh-attachment, Ahankar-Egoism.

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behavioural discripancies of the Khalsa Panth. One was to consider every preacher, diwan or 'Ashram' etc., an inseparable organ of oneself, for the help of such institutions by one's capacity. One was to suggest the methods of 'Panthic' progress. And creation of books relating to 'Gurmat' and establishment of new 'Ashrams' of preaching at suitable places. Attraction of all creeds of the universe to the 'Khalsa' practice through the spread of Panthic principles of brotherhood and by propagation of True Name over the world.

'Khalsa Parliament' was established under the above mentioned objects as well as aims. Its main function was to create embodiments at its own centre for the success of its own objectives and their propagation in the remaining whole world. Both Sikh men and women who practized diwan's principles were accepted in its membership through a special form. For office bearers' elections were held after five years. And the office bearer was to fulfil certain qualifications. He could be removed before his tenure for bad conduct.[1]

Its main office holders were Jathedar, Meet Jathedar Sewak, Meet Sewak and Bhandari.[2] Its Executive Council would comprise of 25 members and its quorum would be of eleven.

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1. Panch Khalsa Diwan de Up Niyam, A Pamphlet.

2. Jathedar = President; Sewak = Secretary;
   Bhandari = Treasurer; Meet = Vice.

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Decisions were to be taken by Gurmatas (Sarab Samiti) and main decisions concerning 'Panth' or books were to be taken in annual Diwans only.

For service of the 'Panth' other Diwans were to be opened with the five main objectives (principles) and they could have their own byelaws to be approved by the Diwan. Main Diwans were to be held at important Takhats.[1] Every member was to contribute towards Diwan's funds one hundredth of his income. Main laws were fundamental and byelaws only could be amended by the Diwan.

Panch Khalsa Diwan, Bhasaur was to revitalize the Sikh religion strictly on the lines enounciated by the Ten Gurus. The Sikh religion is strictly a mono-theistic faith. It is clearly different from the faiths that has existed in India before the advent of Guru Nanak. Pre-Vedic religion was apparantly an animistic and totemic (spiritism). Vedic Religion was polytheism (pluralistic). Upanishads had pantheism (monoism) also called 'non-dualism'. Near about 600 B.C. atheism ridiculed Upanishadic philosophy and preached materialistic monoism giving rise to Buddhism and Jainism, ethical systems without God. After Buddhism there was swing back to the spirit and Hinduistic theism gained ground. Vedanta and monoism could not captivate the minds of masses

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1. Seats of Religious Gurdwaras.

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so Vedic Polytheism was revived. Nanak preached unqualified monotheism, rejecting polytheism differing from monoism and pantheism of Vedantic dualism of Shankra and the methods of Yogis.[1]

Dorothy Field considers Sikh religion as the most interesting of all Indian religions and indeed, then the religions of all world. It is lofty and pure monotheism which sprang out of an attempt to reform and to simplify Mohammadanism and Hinduism. The Sikh formed a nation by reason of their faith and a fine nation of stalwart solders. There is every reason to question the present tendency to recken the Sikhs as a reformed sect of Hinduism as the Gurus were critical of the Brahamanical priesthood, the caste system and Vedas of Hinduism.[2]

In the days, when Panch Khalsa Diwan was established the injunctions of the Tenth Guru had been pushed aside due to the influence of Hindu rites and rituals; and new danger was posed by Christianity. Some social evils for which Sikh Gurus had struggled to save the people reappeared. The women were again the victims of social tyranny. They were denied many equalities and even in baptism they were denied the 'Amrit' of 'Khanda'.[3] The evil custom of Widowhood, child marriage, female infanticide and 'sati' were found in Sikhs. The low

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1. Pritam Singh Gill, Tinity of Sikhism, pp. 62-65.
2. The Religion of the Sikhs, p. 9.
3. A double edged sword, a double dagger.

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caste people were denied equality even after their baptism and adoption of Sikhism.

(B) Social Reform

Panch Khalsa Diwan enounciated a detailed programme for the social uplift of women and the down trodden sections of the society, who were not given equal status even after the working of social reform movements.

The main reforms were proposed in 'diwans' (congregations) and after discussion those were accepted by all as 'Gurmatas'. Such proposals are mentioned in Diwan's literature as 'Dukhra' difficulty, 'Bhulewan' (forgetfulness), 'Mushkal' difficulty 'Kashat' pain and 'Ilan' declaration.

Female Infanticide:

Like Chief Khalsa Diwan and other movements Panch Khalsa Diwan stressed that the Sikhs should not practise female infanticide,[1] killing of daughters. They should excommunicate with daughter killers (kurimar).

Killing daughter or female infanticide was much common in Rajputs. Tod writes that religion no where authorises this barbarty, the marriage laws powerfully promoted infanticide. The practice arose from common motives of pride

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1. Tod writes that Sodhis of Patiala, Nabha, Ambala, Jats of Multan Gujranwala and Jehlum and even Muslims of Ferozepur and Jehlum were slayers of daughters.

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and poverty. In Hinduism a son was the real maintainer of race, who was needed to perform certain religious ceremonies. After annexation, Punjab was found not free from this evil. Bedis and Sodhis were known as 'Kurimar'. Sir John Lawrance called a meeting of all classes and resolutions were passed for the reduction of marriage expenses. With the keen interest of local officials by 1856 the crime practically ceased to exist.[1] But by the time Singh Sabha movement became popular stray cases were there.

Widow Remarriage:

Equally like other Sikh reform movements of the time Panch Khalsa Diwan advocated that they should not keep widows like Hindus. They should remarry them to a suitable partner. In Indian society about 500 B.C. it became the rule that only childless Hindu widows should marry. And from about the time of the Christian era, it has been the law that no Hindu widow, not even a r virgin child widow, shall marry.[2] In Punjab only high classes of Jats disallowed widow's remarriage. It was further decided that widow ashrams should be closed.[3] It was argued that when the Sikhs were praying for the welfare and progress of such Ashrams, they were in a way wishing more widows. Only the old ladies and who were

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1. The Third Punjab Administration Report, p. 11.
2. J.N.Farquhar, Crown of Hinduism, pp. 96-98.
3. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, p. 14.

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unfit for marriage were to be kept in old ladies Ashrams and suitable grants were fixed for such institutions.

Sati Prohibited:

One more deep rooted evil of Hindu society was lingering in the Punjab upto the 19th and the opening of the present century. Burning of widow on the funeral pyre of her husband had become legitimate from Ancient times especially from Harsha's rule (606-647 A.C.). By this act a 'Sati' was believed to have sanctified her ancestors and she got rest herself for ages to come. No religious obligation was in theory but strong social pressure was practised for her burning. It was also due to the hated position of a widow in a Hindu society, who was to live the life of renounciation. Sometimes her hairs were removed and she would become ill omen of the society. Sikh Gurus had preached against this practice and helped Akbar for its removal. But at the death of Ranjit Singh (1839) four of his widows and five of his female servants committed 'sati', self immolation. William Bentink's Act prohibiting 'sati' and making this act punishable like a murder was extended to Punjab in 1849 declaring this act as illegal and punishable in criminal courts. But in Punjab, in remote places 'sati' were burnt alive.

Panch Khalsa Diwan like other leading reformation movements prohibited this and ordered that the Sikhs should not worship any 'Sati'.

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"Rahit" in Diet:

In diet a Sikh of the Guru should not use any intoxicant drinking and smoking. Even tea was considered harmful. A baptised Sikh was to enter kitchen and one should shave food with only a baptised Sikh. Violator of these principles was 'Tankhahia'.[1]

Simplification of Matrimonial Ceremonies:

Special emphasis was laid on simplification of marriage and its ceremonies. Here Panch Khalsa Diwan had some differences with 'Gurmat Parkash Sanskar Bhag' a code for the Sikh ceremonies, published by the Chief Khalsa Diwan. According to page No. 47 of this book, it was written that after finding a suitable boy, a girl should be betrothed. No age bar is given. Panch Khalsa Diwan prescribed 18 years for girls and 20 years for boys to check child marriage.[2] Again 'Sanskar Bhag' writes that for betrothal one rupee, one sword and some sweets should be sent through some "helper". Whereas Panch Khalsa said that no money should be sent and no sweet is needed. No helper should be allowed, only near relative,

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1. Ibid.
2. The Hindu law since 500 B.C. has been that the father who does not marry his daughter before the menses, commits sin. And since the Christian era the law had been held as serious obligation. In higher classes marriage before 10 was not uncommon. It was the desire of groom's family to have a daughter-in-law young enough to adjust herself easily to her new family and surroundings. In East Punjab it was prevelant among Hindus; and Sikhs were also influenced by living together since ages.

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or with the consent of boy and girl, their marriage should be settled. If their marriage is to be performed on the mature age why their betrothal should be earlier, says Panch Khalsa Diwan, to waste money and time of both the sides on useless visits. About method of 'Anand Karaj', Chief Khalsa Diwan's view was criticised by Panch Khalsa that why girl should sit on left side of the boy before Anand ceremony. They preached that before 'Anand Karaj' she should sit on right and after on the left side. The 'Palu' or cloth of boy should not be given to girl, but girl's hand should be given to the boy. They also criticsed circumambulance of the boy and girl as it was copy of Hindu rites. Instead, they argued that after reading of 'Lawan'[1] boy and girl should accept, by bowing before the Grnath, one another's companionship of life. Then girls hand should be given in boy's hand.[2]

No money should be accepted as fee for marriage ceremonies like Brahmins. But Chief Khalsa Diwan says that on happy ceremonies "Ardasa of money is good". Panch Khalsa says that the Sikhs should not give their daughters to non-Sikhs. Only Anand marriage was allowed. In marriages or intercastes all previous castes and sub-castes were to be abondoned after 'Anand' and new Sikh names were to be given after baptism.

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1. Guru Ram Das composed 4 shalokas to be read on marriage ceremony.

2. Teja Singh, Milgobha Sudhar, p. 40.

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Simplification of the Laws of Divorce:

Certain changes were brought in divorce system. No man could get married for the second time or third time till his first wife was alive. If first wife becomes fully unable, the man should foresake her after his second marriage. She may be allowed to settle herself according to her will. In case the first forsaken wife does not like to leave her home, she may be separated with appropriate funds for living. The man cannot forbade her if she desires to adopt another husband. A wife was equally allowed to forsake her unable or irreligious husband with the only exception that she may be deprived of all her claims to his husband's property.[1] No lady without Anand Karaj[2] was to be accepted by a Sikh as 'Khalsa Rahit Nama' says:

'Bina Anand Wibchar Samane,
Kar Anand Nij Naar Pachhane'.

Other minor Reforms for Women:

Panch Khalsa Diwan tried to remove another social evil of purdah[3] among women. Guru Amar Das had prohibited any woman to bow before the Guru who were doing purdah. Now women were to use 'Kaur'[4] after their names as the men were to use

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1. Teja Singh, op.cit., pp. 166-67.
2. Lal Singh, Mera Pind. pp. 377-78. Like Hinduism, 'Manglik' boy or girl was married to Manglik as told by Brahmins.
3. Covering of face with garment to keep privacy from elders.
4. Kaur means

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'Singh' (Lion). Women were to knot their hair on the forehead like men, as they were to comb them twice a day. They were to cover the knot with cloth or small 'dustar'[1], a turban.

Do Nots

In their Do not things, Sikhs were enjoined upon not to wear 'Janiu' (sacred thread) and paint their forehead. They were not allowed to blacken their hair or beard. They could not shave hair from any part, and wear trousers covering knee. No Sikh could wear any ornament or make holes in nose or ears for earing etc.[2] A Sikh should not believe in any tomb, mosque, Pir, Mullah, Qasi and Brahmans etc. He should not believe in any charm or miracle and omen etc. They should not steal, gamble, do bad deeds, backbiting, tell lie or speak imaginary things. They should not see other women or man with maligned eyes except his or her own partner. Sikhs were not allowed to do 'Aarti'.[3]

Certain Do's

They were to do certain duties. They should control their passion. In those times Sikhs used to record themselves in census as Hindus. In February 1901, it was resolved by

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1. Teja Singh, op.cit., p. 35.

2. Niranjan Kaur, Gahina Parhar.

3. Gurdev Singh, 'Aarti' in Panjabi Sahit Kosh, Vol. I, p. 95. 'Angtrik' is used for Aarti, as a Sanskrit word. Sikhs have adopted Aarti Sohila. Bhai Gurdas wrote ; "Sodar Aarti Gaveye Amrit Wela Japu."

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Panch Kahalsa Diwan that they should record themselves as Khalsa by religion and nationality as Sikhs.[1]

Death Ceremonies:

'Khalsa Rahit Parkash' has prescribed all types of ceremonies to be performed according to Guru Granth Sahib in which undivided faith was to be imposed. In its book 'Milgobha Sudhar', Panch Khalsa has tried to correct some ceremonies prescribed by 'Gurmat Rahit Sanskar Bhag'. The later volume says that 'one should not weep[2] "loudly" over deadbody, but ..... it is bad to check tears.' Panch Khalsa Diwan says that one should not weep and shed tears but should accept the sweet will of God. We should not select bones etc.[3] to take to pilgrims or to a sacred tank. Chief Khalsa says that 'if the relatives wish, "Kirtan" should be done'. But Panch Khalsa removes this option and enjoins that Gurbani should be read. After 10th day 'Bhog' ceremony should conclude all mourning and Gurbani should be read in deceased's home.

The Chief Khalsa Diwan says that 'if the deceased is baptised, sword should not be separated'. Again the 'path' (reading of bani) of Granth may be "anywhere". It further says that since crematory is not always clean the mourners may go to a clean place to read 'kirtan sohila'. Panch Khalsa

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1. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, p.
2. Gurdit Singh, op.cit., p. 490.
3. ~~'Sigpa'~~, Ibid., p. 494. 'Phul chugne', 'Siapa'

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insists that Sohila and not Kirtan Sohila should be read at the spot where pyre is burning. Panch Khalsa further says that according to the place all ashes may be removed from cleanliness point of view. No lamp should be placed on the palm of person before death and the deceased should not be removed from the cot on earth.

Reform in Child Naming Ceremonies:[1]

Again there is some differences in Chief Khalsa and Panch Khalsa Codes. Chief Khalsa says that a child name may be taken from the first letter of Granth; if not suitable from the second or third letter of the word from Granth Sahib. But Panch Khalsa Diwan insists on first letter only. They say, "on birth in the ear of the child 'Wahugur' should be uttered". But Chief Khalsa Diwan says that one should utter 'Satnam Shri Wahiguru'. Panch Khalsa Diwan says that the child should be given sweet (gur) as 'Gurti'.[2]

Panch Khalsa Diwan has criticsed Chief Khalsa's code where a Sikh is given option to perform or not, certain ceremonies by which if principles of 'Gurmat' are not violated. They argue that if option is given one may keep one's caste's cremonies intact after entering in Sikhism.

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1. Vengibus, Fern, ed. An Encyclopaedia of Religion, p.54. Infant Baptism - Child Naming Ceremony.

2. In Panjabi culture it is believed that the child inherits the habits of the person who gives him some sweet thing for the first time.

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So it may be said that Panch Khalsa Diwan insisted on code of conduct, unabridged injunctions of Guru Gobind Singh.

(C) Religious Reform:

To achieve its second objective, given in its main principles, 'considering the Sikh Religion Supreme of all Vedic and Scriptural Religions' it was evident that the Panch Khalsa Diwan would place an elaborated plan before its followers. Through 'Khalsa Rahit Parkash', 'unstincted Gurmat' was preached.

Panch Khalsa Diwan effected many changes in religious ceremonies concerning preparation of 'Amrit' (nector) and its administering; in prayer; in 'Mulmantra' and name of sacred pudding, 'Karah Parshad'.

Do's

In its certain 'do's' Panch Khalsa Diwan preached that one should repose full confidence in Adi Granth. One should train one's children to read Adi Granth, which should be always placed on a raised platform or cot called 'Pihra'. After the reading of Guru Granth one should read 'Mudawani' before 'Bhog' or ending. And then Anand should precede the Ardasa (prayer). One should receive another copy of Guru Granth, while sitting in service of a former copy, in standing poosition with folded hands.[1] Since all copies of Holy Book deserve reverence.

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1. Teja Singh, op.cit., p. 84.

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Preparation of Nector[1] (Amrit).

In preparation of 'Amrit', Panch Khalsa Diwan pleaded that there is no need to put some sugar cakes etc. to sweeten the nector as was told by 'Gurmat Rahit Sanskar Bhag'. After sprinkling of nector in to hair one cleans hair immediately. That means, there is something undesirable in nector. 'Amrit' itselt is sweetest of all sweetening elements - 'Nanak Nam Maharas Meetha'. In preparation of nector it was decided that five hymns should be repeated 'Japo', 'Jaap', 'Swaye', 'Chaupaie' and 'Anand'. But it was considered wrong to include 'Sohila' and 'Rahiras' in the previous five hymns told by Chief Khalsa Diwan.

Chief Khalsa Diwan says that a 'Jathedar' who is selected previously should read hymns. Then that 'Jathedar' should read five times Mulmantra to the persons being initiated. 'Jathedar' should give five times five doses of nector to the five beloveds. After preparation of nector, one headman or priest should give permission for baptism. Panch Khalsa Diwan says that when all beloveds are equal why one should be considered superior one. Five beloved should repeat five times Mulmantra one by one. Again they should one by one give five doses of nector. No one except the priest should give permission for baptism.[2]

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1. Vengilius, Ferm, ed. op.cit., p. 54.
   Usually water is used in Baptism as nector, due to its efficacy as a means of removing contagion acquired by dangerous potencies, death or birth etc. and of moral failure and sin.
2. Teja Singh, Milgobha Sudhar, pp. 21-27.

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It has been stated that after baptism one should refrain from 'Kutha'[1] eating, Musli's company, cutting of hair and 'Bikhia' use. Panch Khalsa Diwan says that in this way one is permitted to meet all women except Muslim. Again, the bycot of the violator of above four 'do nots' should be included in prohibitions.

The Diwan decided that 'Amrit' (Nector) is not only for the four castes of Hindus. All kinds of people were to be accepted in Sikhism r irrespective of caste and following.[2] In Sikhism Amrit was thrown in ponds and tanks etc. to purify them. Panch Khalsa Diwan prohibited this saying that one should not throw it everywhere.

Sacred Pudding:

Chief Khalsa Diwan says 'to prepare Karah Parshad one should become clean and taking flour, sweet and ghee in a clean pot'... Panch Khalsa Diwan amends this method. There should be 'A ready Khalsa' instead of 'the person to prepare Karah Parshad'. It should be prepared in iron pot and not in any 'cleaned pot'. Panch Khalsa Diwan used the word 'Mahaparshad'[3] instead of Karah Parshad. There is no need to give sacred food to the priest before giving to five beloveds. He may be given as first among the five beloveds.

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1. Meat prepared through Muslim method.
2. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, p.
3. Teja Singh, op.cit., p. 186. In rural area Mahaparshad also means meat. Bhai Gurdas is quoted in his 20th Var and Kabit Nos. 175, 309 and 454, where the word 'Mahaparshad' is used.

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Total Assimilation in the Khalsa:

To effect equality preached by the Tenth Guru, Panch Khalsa Diwan suggested some efforts for conversions. If any one came in to the Khalsa, one felt proud in being called by one's previous caste, as one felt more affiliated to the previous caste than the Khalsa. It was suggested that those who had come into the folds of Sikhism, they were to dis-affiliate themselves from their previous families and clans completely. And before administering such people to Khalsa brotherhood they were to be scruitinized first to ensure that they had severed all connections with their original families.[1] The emphasis was laid that baptism was a means and embracing of Sikhism was an end. Both these actions had lot of difference, so far as their underlying meaning was concerned. Therefore, there should be preaching of 'adoption of Sikhism' instead of 'baptism'. And in place of 'I want to be baptised', one must lay emphasis on 'I want to enter Khalsa Religion'.[2]

Purification Principles:

It was found that the bards attached with religious places had become perverted and their successors were found cutting hairs and smoking.[3] To effect purification and discipline it was resolved that for the members for 'Panj Paras', 'Granthies', preachers, bards, presidents, scretaries, treasurers, members of committees of Singh Sabha etc. those Sikhs are not to be taken who tied their beard, husbands and

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1. It was Kirtnash, Kulnash, Dharmnash, Karmnash.
2. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, p.
3. Ibid., p. 18.

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wives unbaptised, and married without 'Anand' men and women; persons having sexual relations with other than their partners, those who did not donate 'Daswandh' out of their income and doing no 'Nitnem' and not performing 'Gurmaryada' from birth to death in their houses.[1]

Punishments for the Sikhs going astray:

Those Sikhs, who practised five main sins - eating Kutha, cutting of hair, illegal sex, back biting and sharing meals with the practiser of the former four sins, were to be discharged from the Khalsa. But they were allowed to reenter, if they again accepted baptism and obtain forgiveness of the congregation (Sangat) for their sins. Such Sikhs who had gone astray were not required to go to Ganges etc. They were to stand with folding hands before the congregation and should ask for forgiveness. They were to accept any fine done by that 'Sangat'. But they should not become impertenent in accepting or doing any fine.[2]

Gurudom Discarded:

In those days of late 19th and opening of the 20th centuries, the Nirankaris and Kukas were having belief in the existence of their physical gurus, next to the Tenth Guru and Granth Sahib. They were becoming bare-headed also, forgetting

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1. Idem.
2. Teja Singh, op.cit., pp. 13-14.

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their turbans. Singh Sabha movement's slogan 'No Guru Save the Granth' was not fully effective. Panch Khalsa Diwan, Bhasaur resolved to brand such people as 'Manmatias' following the whims of their hearts. They were considered apart from the Khalsa, unless they give up both these beliefs of physical guru and bare-headedness.[1]

Sikh Festivals:

Panch Khalsa Diwan also tried to bring some change in the celebration of festivals. It was decided that the Sikhs should celebrate days of their gurus instead of Diwali and Holi etc., which were Hindu festivals. It was also resolved that the Sikhs should celebrate Baisakhi instead of Hola at Shri Keshgarh Sahib, Anandpur, with great pump and show.[2]

It also rectified one mistaken celebration of the martyrdom of 'Forty Muktas' which actually took place on 21st of Baisakh, 1762 Bikarmi, but was celebrated on First of Magh, which was sacred according to Hindu religion.[3] It was decided that the Sikhs should celebrate the martyrdom of Muktas at Muktsar on 21st of Baisakh in the fifst week of May instead of the first day of Magh which falls in January.

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1. Ibid., p. 69.
2. Teja Singh, Khalsa Rahit Parkashak Sewkan, p. 33.
3. Ibid.

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Ragmala and Mulmantra:

Panch Khalsa Diwan endeavoured to throw light on the historic issue of Ragmala which was considered to be the extrapolation in Guru Granth. Its extensive details are found in its book 'Ragmala Darpan'. The Diwan also tried to emphasise that Gurmantar of the Khalsa was 'Wahugur' instead of 'Wahiguru.'[1] It was argued that 'Wahiguru' was taken from 'Krishan Ustat' which was added by the Bhaktas and the real word was 'Wahugur' addressed to God only. The Diwan also pleaded that it was wrong to read Ardas by 'Bhagauti Pad.' They preached that 'Satnam' should be used which is according to Guru's mission. Bhai Gurdas was quoted as 'Balihari Guru Apne, Satnam Jis Mantar Dirrain'[2] to support their view.

Panch Khalsa Diwan was right in its resolve that no one can preach any religion from truer heart unless one has adopted complete form of that religion. Thenceforth no Sahajdhari or Semi-Sikh could become member of any Sabha, society or priestly organization unless she or he becomes Khalsa alongwith his or her family in all forms. In religious ceremonies it gave importance to Sikh scriptures which did not

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1. Babu Heera Singh, Khalse Da Gurmantar Wahugur he hai, pp.2-11.
   None of the Gurus have uttered 'Wahiguru'. It is found in the hymns of Bhatts (Bards) who are panegyrist and enconiast Wahiguru is used for the exaltation of Lord Krishna. 'Wa' is used for 'Wasudeva', 'Hi' for 'Hirde', 'gur' for 'Gupat Andhera' (hidden darkness) and 'Ru' for Noor (light). Thus Wahiguru means 'Imparter of light to the hidden darkness in the mind of Wasudeva i.e. Sri Krishna, the son of Wasudeva. Guru's address to the God was 'Gur' and not 'Guru'.
   "Wamuhtaza Meperwaho Nanak Das Kaho Gurwaho"
   Nanak Waho Wahogurmukho paiayn ....."
2. Teja Singh, op.cit., pp. 143-147.

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believe in empty rituals and idolatory. It was not less than a revolutionary step to abondon all practices of believing in phyiscal Gurus and assigning them equality with Guru Granth Sahib. This brought the Sikhs of Guru Gobind distinct from Namdhari, Nirankari and other movements which had allowed relaxation in one form or the other from the injunctions of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh.

But more encouraging progress was seen in the social reforms introduced by this Diwan. Its emphasis on widow-remarriage, equal status to women in baptism, married life and divorce, women education, anti-purda and discontinuance of child marriage, all led to the uplift of women, who was ignored by all classes and religions so far. Women were to receive baptism of double edged sword, they were to become members of social and religious organizations, though they were not yet granted right in father's property.

In marriage ceremonies, it laid stress on Anand Marriage introduced by the Sikh Gurus and all marriages by Vedi or Vedic rituals were considered invalid. It is said that the Diwan discontinued dowry and extravagant expenses on marriage parties. Only one sword was given in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib to the boy as a token of betrothal and marriage. It tried to check polygamy, though its leader Babu Teja Singh had four marriages. Perhaps, this resolution came in later stages.

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The Panch Khalsa Diwan established supremacy of Sikh code of conduct from birth to death ceremonies. Its work for women section cannot be under estimated.

But it is surprising that all these reforms proved shortlived and could not make its originating body a mass movement completely. It was perhaps due to the orthodox and conservative attitude of the Sikh leaders who were annoyed by the offensive altrations in prayer, 'Mulmantra' and by 'Ragmala,' 'Pad Shed' and 'Bhagauti' issues.

But we cannot absolve its founder from the offence he committed by marrying a student and teacher of the school of his own Diwan, as our society considers this a serious offence on the part of leaders like Teja Singh. A man who framed principles for checking polygamy fell victim to human weakness and dimmed his prestigious image in masses and inteligentia alike.

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CHAPTER VI

EDUCATIONAL AND LITERARY ACTIVITIES

Panch Khalsa Diwan, Bhasaur aimed at imparting education and enriching of Gurmukhi (Panjabi) through various methods.[1] For education their stress was on female education to ameliorate the women folk from all inequalities in social and religious spheres. And in order to enrich Panjabi language it produced books and periodicals in abundance.

(A) Educational Activities:

The main stress of Bhasaur movement was centred on female education. For them it opened a Middle School and after 14 years it was converted into a College where religious education was given with other courses in Punjabi language. Babu Teja Singh, the central figure of this movement seems to be well aware that if awakening in any country is to be brought in the real sense, education should be popularized among women, a vital organ of society.

Female education in Indian Society was almost neglected. It was only a domestic arrangement for girls of high families. Generally people were lacking interest, due to popular prejudices resulting from social conservations. Another cause was consideration that girls were valuable helpers in farming, in a country where majority of masses was poor

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1. Fourth Main Principle in Chapter V.

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peasants. The diversion of girl's time in education was judged as a positive loss of money and labor effecting productivity in fields.

In Sikhism, men and women are complement of each other. Guru Nanak and his successors advocated the equal status of woman strongly. Woman is not a source of sin, vice or dishonour for man as was assumed by Hindu culture. There would be no life without women, neither race nor society. Through the institution of marriage she helps in maintaining sexual discipline and establishing a morally healthy society. In Sikh society she enjoys freedom of education, worship and baptism. Sikhism puts no bar on her and considers her 'Ardhangini' i.e. half organ of man or society.[1] She has multifarious duties to perform in a family. She is main consultant in all domestic affairs and problems. She is nurse, master, doctor, judge, technician, cook, treasurer and priest in various duties, indoor and outdoor. So "her all round knowledge is first requisite for a healthy and progressive society which wants self government".[2]

Before the advent of the British, education among the Punjabi women was of purely religious nature confined to their acquiring the principal tenets of their respective religions. Only a small section of the female population was

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1. Pritam Singh Gill, Heritage of Sikh culture, pp. 91-95.

2. Sanaullah Khan, "Girls Education in the Punjab" in The Panjab Past and Present, Vol. VII(April,1973), p.118.

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educated in the modest requirements of household life. Early marriage had limited their education which fitted the girls to fulfil the duties of the household of their husbands. The education of a Sikh girl was confined to the study of the Granth Sahib, the memorising of Japji. Gurmukhi was taught in Dharmshalas by their priests (Bhais).[1]

After annexation, the organized Education Department of the Punjab Government faced some practical difficulties in the way of girls education. Popular prejudices of social conservatism were powerfully in operation and likely to dampen the energies of Government. The first successful experiment in U.P. encouraged Punjab Government and first Girls School was opened in Rawalpindi in December, 1856. By the end of that year 306 girls were attending 17 schools.[2] But the General Report on the Administration of the Punjab for the year 1849-50 and 1850-51 remarks that female education was in all parts of the Panjab. In Lahore city there were 16 girl schools.[3] But domestic education could not be ascertained. Lack of funds and trained teachers were to stand in the way of girls education. By 1875 five normal schools were opened to train teacheresses for schools. By 1886 there were 193 primary schools for girls. The Indian Education Commission of 1881 recommended to revise

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1. Sanaullah Khan, op.cit., pp. 110-111.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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the courses for primary schools[1]. In Missionary Schools reading of religious books was taught. Only non-sectarian classes were taught by house to house teachers of the Punjab Association.[2] The Chief Inspectress Miss L.M.Stratford reported in 1916 that vernaculars and needle work were usually well taught in the large primery schools and arithmatic was taught to meet household needs only.[3]

Education under Singh Sabha:

The Singh Sabha Movement strived for giving religious and practical education to the Sikhs and started 'Widiah Punjab', a periodical in 1880 to preach for education. Baba Khem Singh Bedi rendered meritorious services to the country by stirring up people to educate their daughters. In 1907 Chief Khalsa Diwan had established the Sikh Educational Conference to bring educational renaissance in the Punjab. It worked for girls education also with incentive provided by two of the greatest advocates of women's education, Bhai Takhat

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1. Punjab Past and Present, Vol. VII, pp. 114-116. By 1892, there were 310 schools with 10027 students. By 1898 schools were 317 bearing average annual expenditure on a girl rupees 10 and 6 annas. In 1905-06 there was great progress. By 1913-14 attendance had increased from 10 to 14 percent.

2. The Education Report, 1893-94. It was a branch of National Indian Association of London, and was established in 1886. It was successor of Shiksha Sabha. Its aim was to encourage friendship between English and Indian people. It had Victoria School, formerly Central Female School. 'Punjab Magazine', a monthly was its organ. It opened home classes in 1893-94 to meet the case of 'Purdah' women.

3. Sanaullah Khan, op.cit., p. 116.

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Singh, Ferozepur and Baba Nihal Singh of Kairon. The Singh Sabha movement was responsible for starting girls schools at Kairon, Sidhwan, Jaspalon and Ferozepur. Sikh Educational Conference also started Khalsa Dastkari School for Girls at Amritsar in 1913.

Widya Bhandar Panch Khand (Bhasaur) :

The founder Secretary of Singh Sabha, Bhasaur had done tremendous work in the company of Bhai Takhat Singh of Ferozepur. When Teja Singh became particular about wearing of turban and shunning of ornaments for girl students in 1903 he asked Takhat Singh to effect both these reforms in Ferozepur Widyalia. But Bhai Takhat Singh showed his inability for the reasons best known to him.

Panch Khalsa Diwan was established on Baisakhi day (13 April, 1907) two years later a school with the name of Widya Bhandar Panch Khand[1] was started upto middle classes. Teja Singh was its first Manager and his wife Mehtab Kaur was appointed its Superintendent. Bhai Randhir Singh Narangwal, Master Harnam Singh Sekha (Malauel) Master Mota Singh, M.L.A., Babu Harchand Singh Overseer and Bhai Wasawa Singh were other pioneer 'Sewaks' (servants) of this school which was called 'Ashram' also.

This school was co-educational, but later Bhai Ji Khalsa School[2] was started separately for boys after the name

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1. Panch Khand was a new name assigned to the Centre of Panch Khalsa Diwan outside the village Bhasaur on an old mount.
2. Khalsa Parliament Gazette, Vol. XV (May-July, 1956).

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of Bhai Wasawa Singh who had donated his all property and house for Panch Khalsa Diwan.

Girls School started with Bhai Randhir Singh of Narangwal as its first Headmaster, who insisted on turbans for girls, much. Girls were to abstain from wearing ornaments, they were required to dress like other students and baptism was compulsory. Students were provided meals, books, clothing and lodging free of cost. It became a model of educational institution and was widely acclaimed in the whole country.[1] Poor and orphan girls were benefitted much. Wearing of turban was copied by Kairon Bhunjangan Ashram and by Bhunjangan schools Jaspalon and Sidhwan Khurd. The Diwan preached this through a book 'Dastar Parbodh'. The 'Kirtan' of the girls, trained in music, presented natural scene in early morning and evening.

Wearing of turban and 'Kirpan' put problems many times before the school. During Marshal Law of 1919 twenty girl students of this school were detained at Amritsar railway station alongwith five sewadars and maid-servants. The group had gone to appear in Gyani examination in Lahore University. They were locked in a room as they all were wearing swords prohibited under government law. They were released after much struggle.[2]

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1. Lal Singh, Amolka Amar Phul, p. 16.

2. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazette, Vol. 25 (Sept., 1964), p. 11.

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The expenses were met from the treasury of Panch Khalsa Diwan. Maharaja of Nabha, Ripudaman Singh gave a perpetual grant of two hundred rupees a month during his visit to the school.

Regulations for Students:

There were certain regulations for admission in the school and its boarding house. No girl was admitted below the age of 7 years. She could write to her relatives, already mentioned in Admission form, her difficulties, which were obligatory to be told to the Manager so that he or she should try to redress those difficulties. Generally unmarried girls were admitted but Executive Committee could allow a married girl also. No parent was allowed to marry their girl before the age of 15 years or in a non-Sikh family or to unbaptised boy. For purchasing five symbols of the Khalsa 10 rupees were taken from the parents, the only fund taken by the school. Parent's help to the School was acknowledged. But the help with the intention of helping the school because their daughter was studying there was rejected. Five classes were to be completed. Taking girl off before completion of the 5th class was liable to fine or penalty at the rates prescribed by the school. No leave beyond 10 days was allowed. Orphan and blind girls were brought up by the school management and they were married to suitable boys selected by the executive committee. To keep discipline the student could be expelled if her stay was considered harmful. Guardians were to fill up special forms at the time of admission of the girl.

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Management of the School:

The school had a detailed constitutions. Its management was having 3 types of members. A person depositing one thousand rupees was permanent founder 'Modhi'; doner of five rupees per month was founder and giving rupee one per month was 'Sathi'; companion. Permanent companion was to deposit 200 rupees in schools treasury. Helpers of other types were considered 'Sahaik' helpers. Its Executive Committee had eleven members including Manager and its meeting in Chait month (March) of every year was necessary for budgeting and other works. Incentive was given to the brilliant students in the shape of medals etc. Various courses of Punjab University from Budhimani to Gyani alongwith religious education were taught.

School closed and reopened:

Soon financial difficulties came on the surface. A grant of 2 lacks was cancelled by the Maharaja of Patiala as Teja Singh is said to have neglected him as one of five beloveds while distributing sacred pudding at Chail in 1910. Another donation was with-held by the government from the American Sikhs which was 400 rupees per month due to the propaganda in 'Samachar' and 'Advocate' against the Diwan for 'Ragmala' issue. It was closed[1] in 1916 but its followers

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1. Romesh Walia, op.cit., p. 21.
   Teja Singh Started Vidyakendra for girls which could not make heedway. Since the atmosphere in the state was not congenial.

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outside India protested and with their promise to send four to five hundred rupees a month it was proposed to be reopened. A permanent fund committee was formed of 72 members. Giani Gurbax Singh editor of 'Patiala Gazettee' presented the report and collected 538 rupees for the school at the spot. In 1917 on 14th April by a Gurmata it was reopened.

New Experiment to call mothers for Services in Hostel:

In 1919 new building was proposed but rains dampened the plan. A new programme was planned in January 1919 to call every month 5 mothers of the students to serve in boarding house, to cultivate a sense of community service and to make them known of Khalsa code of conduct.

Khalsa Quari College 1926-1942:

Widya Bhandar of Panch Khalsa Diwan was closed due to financial difficulties in the days when Akali movement was started for Gurdwara reforms. But thousands of girls had received education from this 'Ashram' in a period of hardly more than a decade.

Now it was decided to start a college at Panch Khand. One girl Niranjan Kaur had passed Middle and Gyani from Panch Khand and qualified in English subject of Matric. After the closure of Panch Khand she dedicated her life, for the popularization of girls education, She was married to Babu Teja Singh in 1922 on 3rd of Kartik. She is said to have selected him on the condition that he would help her fully in the newly started college work.

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Preparations for College:

A circular was issued on 23rd June 1925 containing the rules and regulations for the Khalsa Quari College. It was proposed that 'Khalsa Quari Unatkar' a branch of Widya Bhandar would be called Khalsa Quari College. One hundred members and helpers were demanded or one doner was required who could donate 3 lack of rupees for the college. Five to ten lady teachers were demanded. The general public and Khalsa Diwans particularly were requested to verify those regulations about the college. And all type of suggestions were invited within five months as the college was proposed to be started on 17th March, 1926 A.D.

Notice to Seek Permission from State Government:

Teja Singh's marriage with a student was disliked in all corners of the state. His opposition became move evident when the pair was served with a notice[1] from the court of District Magistrate Sunam dated 25 Falgun 1962 Bikarmi, 1925 A.D. in which they were accused for not seeking prior permission of State Government to open a college at Bhasaur. And they were threatened with official action in case of not obtaining Government's permission to open a college.

Niranjan Kaur was appointed its Principal in 1926. Totally free education was envisaged. And a good number of

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1. Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23 (June, 1964), p.17.

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girls entered that college. An entrance form was to be filled by the girl, promissing that she accepted all regulations of the college; and Executive Committee was to accept that admission application.

Principles of Khalsa Quari College:

There were minor changes in the principles made by the school. A girl was to be eight years at the time of admission. Generally the regulations were of the same nature with the change in marriageable age which was raised from 15 yrs to 18 with the addition, if any parents married a girl before that age or to an unbaptised boy or without her consent that marriage was considered invalid and the parents were fined rupees two thousands. Now married girls were refused admission. Equally heirless or blind girls were married to a suitable boy after attaining the age of 20. Every student was considered free from parents at the age of 20. To take a girl off the college before the completion of 8th class was liable to penalty. Leave above five days was charged at the rate of five rupees a day upto five over days. Otherwise after that, student's name was removed. Donation had the same conditions given about the school.

Courses:

The college was to employ ten professors and seats were only for 500 students. They were having self styled courses for this college, to be taught in ten classes. Maha Gyani

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(Philosophy) was the highest course and Degree classes were taught according to Punjab University Scheme. Entrance English was included in Panjabi and religious studies. Teaching staff was to be fully qualified.[1]

Management:

Sajni, 'Sakhi' and 'Upkari' were the categories of the members of its management. A person donating rupees 3 lack was considered as inaugurator and all others as founders. For running college Administration 25 members (Sajnis) 'Karaj Sadhak Dal' was fixed with 10 to 20 rupees as pocket money including principal and professors. Its meeting was held quarterly on 25 of the month. That Dal was to scruitinize income and expenditure of that college.[2]

Closure of College:

The progress of that college was not liked by the opposing groups who poisoned Maharaja of Patiala against this institution. Niranjan Kaur published an appeal for 5 lack

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1. A circular of Panch Khalsa Diwan, 23.6.1925.

2. Qualifications of Professors and their salary was as under: Budhiman (Pbi.F.A.) was given Rs. 20/-, Widwan (Pbi.B.A.) Rs. 30/-, Gyani (Pbi.M.A.) Rs. 40/-, Uch Gyani (Pbi. Double M.A.)Rs. 50/- and Mahagyani (Philosopher) would get Rs. 60/- per month.

The staff included 'Maha Adhiyapika' (Principal), 'Parbandhika' (Superintendent), 'Uch Adhiyapikas' (Professors), 'Adhiapikas' (Masters) and 'Mukh Adhiapika' (Head Mistress). The staff was to be appointed by the Executive Committee duly approved and qualified.

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rupees and toured outside for collections. But the opponents reached every where to put hurdles before the paths of that college. Membership forms of 50 thousand rupees were filled for college. In this way the college went smoothly for five years. The death of Teja Singh in 1933 proved a set back to this institution. Panic pervailed in members and doners. So it was natural for Bibi Niranjan Kaur to lose spirits. In the lack of any help she went from place to place for help. But when all relatives and companions had left her it was impossible for her to stand on firm footings. In this disgust she left this world leaving behind a lofty institution crying for help. It was closed in 1942 only 9 years after the death of Teja Singh.

After partition it was restarted for sometime but ill fated college could not come into existence inspite of the courage of a few people to start it again. An aborative attempt was made in 1969, as is evident from a pamphlet, to start Panch Khalsa Missionary College for Budhiwani, Gyani, Widwani and Granthis. Both boys and girls who had passed middle standard of Punjabi were to be admitted. But Bhasaur is lacking a college upto the present time when every medium sized village or town has established college for higher education.

The work of the school and college of Bhasaur movement cannot be understimated. Thousands of girls received education, considered perfect in context of those days. It was forward step in female education in fully orthodox society when

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girls education was not acknowledged as necessary. It was a unique experience of institutional control over the domestic life of a girl by which girls marriage was to be regulated by the college. To consider a girl of 20 years as free from the control of her parents was certainly a revolutionary step. Our society is still unable to create the institutions of such type. No body would like to give conclusive rights to declare his daughter's marriage as invalid if that is not performed by Sikh code of conduct or if that is settled with a boy considered fit by her college.

Free education was equally a unique step, perhaps much forward in that society. A fully disciplined and organized education imparted by Panch Khalsa Diwan may not be available till now. Those school and college of Bhasaur movement were the pioneer in imparting religious education to females. Democratic set up of organizing bodies was itself a specimen where duties were assigned to representative of Executive Committee entirely based on democratic functioning.

Panch Khalsa Diwan may certainly be regarded for its legacies in the field of female education and paved the way for further progress in this field to be achieved by the successive generations.

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LITERARY ACTIVITIES OF BHASAUR MOVEMENT

To entich Panjabi language with all types of knowledge and learning[1], the Bhasaur movement was fortunate enough to have good and energetic writers. Though mainly a religious and social body Panch Khalsa Diwan's efforts in producing various types of literature made Bhasaur a seat of learning in historical and literary aspects.

Its founder Secretary was a scholar orator, philosopher and writer. The scholars like Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, Giani Sher Singh, Giani Lal Singh, Babu Heera Singh etc. made Bhasaur a treasury of literature, publishing more than forty books and seven periodicals. And these publications have special value for researchers since they give interesting controversies of the period.

Panch Khalsa Diwan was anxious to see alongwith religious reforms, the promotion and progress of Panjabi language and culture in its own state and other parts of the country. Due to the influence of Orientalists the progress of vernaculars was, also engaging the interest of the people. The Diwan congratulated Maharaja of Patiala for making Panjabi as official language in some departments and requested Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar to start the use of Panjabi in

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1. See 4th Main Principle of Panch Khalsa Diwan, in Chapter V.

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records.[1] Though the Panch Khalsa Diwan had no own press, yet the publications in good number attract our attention towards the literary zeal of the Diwan inspite of limited resources at its disposal.

Bhasaur movement entered in the field of publication with 'Veer Sudhar Patar' a book written on one diwan, congregational meeting at Bakapur near Phillaur where its author Maulvi Karim Baksh was baptised with other family members. Another book came in 1904 called 'Veer Sudhar Pattar lai Uttar Abhilakhi Chirwen'.

'Khalsa Rahit Parkash' was the book on the Khalsa code of conduct. Like Chief Khalsa Diwan's book 'Gurmat Parkash Sanskar Bhag' (1910-1915) it was not less than a 'Magna Carta' of Panch Khalsa Diwan. The book opens with 90 'Updesh' or commands for the Sikh's religious and social ceremonies. The Gurmatas thoroughly discussed in various diwans and then accepted for the Sikhs at Damdama Sahib in 1908, make the second portion of the book alongwith five declarations. Five main principles and other bye-laws are also included. And the volume concludes with 'Bhav Grahin Parkash Patar Gurmate Parkash', the form which a reader is requested to fill and send to the Diwan. 'Milgobha Sudhar' (1920) also forms this class of books on codes. It is a fine comparison of the codes enounciated in Chief Khalsa Diwan's 'Gurmat Parkash Sanskar Bhag' and 'Khalsa Rahit Parkash'. Certain amendments as 'Tazwiz' or solutions are suggested for

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1. Teja Singh, Gurmate Parkashak Sewkan, p. 121.

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'Gurmat Parkash Sanskar Bhag'[1]. It was argued that some non-Sikhs had deliberately left some loopholes as options in Chief Khalsa Diwan's code and its very name was challenged as not meant for Khalsa. The new name suggested was 'Khalsa Maryada Parkash'. 'Manmat Parhar' of 1900 was also in this class. 'Khalsa Panch Tantar' (1921) also belongs to this category.

Panch Khalsa Diwan indulged in deep research which resulted in serious implications. 'Gurmatar Parbodh' (1925) was a serious discussion on the belief that Adi Granth was a summary of Vedas and Sikh Gurus were gods, like Krishna. The controversy was opened about 'Mulmantra' of the Sikhs. It was argued that no Guru have written 'Wahiguru' which is not 'Akal Bodhak' in other words Guru is not God to whom address is made as 'Wahi' or, the exaltation to the God. And 'Gur' would be the exact addressee as God. Wahiguru was told as added by the Bhatts taken from 'Krishan Ustat'.[2] 'Khalsa Da Gur Mantar Wahugur he hai' was another informative book by Babu Heera Singh on 'Mulmantar'. 'Bhagauti Parbodh'[3] (1919) was another serious discussion on the use of Bhagauti in Khalsa prayer, by Giani Lal Singh. The author has tried to prove that 'Satnam' is the word for 'Bhagauti', through evidences from hymns of the Gurus.

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1. Teja Singh, Gurmat Parkash Sanskar Bhag Arthat Gur Maryada Karn di Bidhi te Wichar, pp. 1-27.
2. See Chapter V.
3. A pamphlet of 23 June, 1925.

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'Bhagat Rachna Nirne' (1952) was another publication of the same author who was Manager of Panch Khalsa Diwan after Teja Singh for a long period. It is argued that it would be injustice to call Guru's creations as copies of Bhagats hymns. If the Guru have used Bhagat's name, it is used for evidence or condemnation. As Bhagat's creations preach 'Manmat' it cannot be a part of 'Gurmat'. Pandit Kartar Singh Dakha wrote a book 'Bhagauti Mandan' criticizing 'Bhagauti Parbodh'[1]. Till recently in 1969 Giani Lal Singh, who died only 4 years ago, gave another book to the Panch Khalsa Diwan 'Puratan Ardas te Pt. Kartar Singh Dakha de Bhagauti Mandan da Gurmat Anusar Khandan'. The author condemns the view that Bhagauti was created by Gobind Singh to kindle the spirit of bravery in Sikhs. Bhai Mani Singh's collection of all translations in the shape of 'Dasam Granth' has no mention of 'Bhagauti'. It happened that after Guru's death many poets fell into the hands of Hill chiefs and those writers might have been compelled to write the Granths preaching that Guru had worshipped the goddess. It was intended to induce idol worship in Sikhism. 'Ham Hindu Nahin'[2] by Lal Singh was another book dealing with the nature of Sikhism. 'Aryan De Dhol Da Pol (1920) was a book by Mohan Singh Vaid which came as reaction to the serious attack on Sikh Gurus by Swami Daya Nand, was also a critical book 'Dasam Granth Nirne' by Dr. Ran Singh was another serious study published in 1918. 'Jafarnama Steek' in 1921 may also be mentioned in this category.

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1. Teja Singh, Puratan Ardas te Bhagauti Parbodh, was the full name of that publication.
2. Kahan Singh also wrote a book on the same topic with the same title in 1914.

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Another category of books includes, the books which describe in detail the extrapolation in Guru Granth. Master Niranjan Singh and Giani Gurdial Singh wrote a book 'Satguru Bina Hor Kachi Hai Bani' denying Ragmala as Guru's creation. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha writes in 'Gurmat Sudhakar' that Ragmala was composed by Alam during Akbar's rule. Bhai Santokh Singh's 'Suraj Parkash' etc. are quoted to prove that 'Mudawani' is a stamp to close Guru Granth. 'Ragmala Khandan' (1917) and Ragmala Darpan (1917) by Sher Singh also deny Ragmala as added by the author of Guru Granth. Gurmukh Singh had answered the eleven questions raised already by objection No.2 in Khalsa Rahit Parkash.[1] Contemporary papers throw much light on the topic.[2]

Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan (1967), 'Aduti Jiwan Birtant' of Babu Teja Singh (1927), 'Amolak Amar Phul' by Lal Singh in 1966 attempt to create history. There is less interpretation of facts, only accumulation of facts, sometimes chronologicalk is the character of these volumes. The authors have shown less interest in making them historical than descriptive with free tint of bias. It appears as if the creations are propagating some ideas though with the humble efforts to show the sense of documentation. 'Nabha pati de Darshan' (1928), 'Kirpan Wirlap((1920), 'Darah Pukar' (1920-21) 'Orki Bine Rattar' (1922) are another attempts in

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1. Ragmalan Mandan Parbodh Granth (1908).
2. Panth Sewak Ragmala Number (October 24, 1917) criticised Bhai Vir Singh for his shifting stands. Books Ragmala Parbodh by Giani Sahib Singh of Dhamtan and Hukam Singh's Panthak Rawan in 1918 are helpful to crystalize some aspects.

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this field of historical discriptions. 'Gurudom Parcharak Mahant', Tract No. 2 by Lal Singh in 1944 is a glossory of the minor Sikh sects which is less historic than biographical cum descriptive.

For educational institutions it had various publications. 'Widya Bhandar Sabandhi Sakim te Niyamawali' (1908) 'Wirlap Widya Bhandar' (1920) about the closing of school, 'Khalsa Quari College Arambhik Sidant'(1926) were dealing with regulations and administration of the Institutions. For course 'Gurmukhi Courses' in 5 volumes were published ~~to~~ in 1926. These courses won much opposition as they were published to make easy for girls students the hymns of Granth, by breaking words of the lines, formerly connected together. 'Alaukik Jhaka' presents the miserable conditions of the students of girls college during 1928. 'Nitisar' 1935 was the amended version of 'Chankiya Niti' a best book on politics. 'Budh Parkash' or Sarukutawlisar' was also on the same topic published by the Diwan in Panjabi.

All proceedings of the Panch Khalsa 'Sammelans' were published as 'Khalsa Diwan Bhasaur De Gurmate te Faisle' from 1901. 'Sambodh Pattar' (1917), 'Veer Da Wichora (1920) about the murder of Teja Singh's son Shamsher Singh, 'Kalmi Tasweer Arthat Chithi Patar' depicting Teja Singh's ideas, were other miscellaneous works.

Periodical Literature:

Babu Teja Singh was not only a good writer but a good journalist too. Bhasaur movement owe's to him the efforts

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to publish more than five periodicals of which 'Khalsa Parliament Gazettee' was much important. 'Panch Khalsa Samachar', 'Kakar Bahadur', 'Khalsa Panchayan', 'Khalsa Suari' and 'Malwa Gazettee' were some other publications of periodicals.

'Khalsa Parliament Gazettee' was important journal started on 25th October, 1924 as a monthly paper. Though after one month it was made fortnightly but it is said that its essays, news and editorials had all qualities of a weekly. Teja Singh was its founder Editor only of the Ist Part of the Ist Volume. And after 3 years on 13 April,1927 Lal Singh Giani became its editor. Other editors were Banta Singh, Braham Singh Ferozepuri, Chanda Singh, M.P.D. Malaya and Amar Singh Kot Gangu Rai.

Mission of Khalsa Parliament Gazettee:

It was to alert the people and the ruler to their respective rights. It was to analyse the public unrest, its reasons, excesses of the officials and remedies to unrest. To suggest the people the means and methods of their success through reforms and progress. It was to inform the people and Government about their ignorance and to tell them the mean for peaceful living. And it was to preach the mission of the Khalsa Parliament on the whole world, as a main method for successful worldly life.

This magazine played special role for the progress of the work taken by the Bhasaur worker. It remained in

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circulation in the middle of the last decade. It threw light through its special numbers on various historical and spock making events. Other magazines were of less significance and were in circulation for short spans of time.

Thus in the field of literature the contribution of the Panch Khalsa Diwan may not be ignored by a student of history and a literary person. It is regretable that no care is being taken for the preservation of material. The Diwan has crystalized all the controversies in Gurmat code. Its literature speaks volumes of its ups and downs in that struggle.

Its publications cannot be categorized in water tight compartments since the fear of pigeon holeing of knowledge is there. Moreover the authors had no conclusive or singular aim in their brains. If they wrote for the courses of their institutions they indulged in interpretations giving rise to various controversies. If they created a book on code of conduct they tried to make it an encyclopaedia of 'Khalsa Rahit', dealing with right from the less general to most special problems. In their controversial enterprises they have shown historical sense to the extent that history deals with evidence. But they seem to have failed to write scientific history due to the ignorance or limited knowledge about the philosophy of history on the part of its authors. Though objectivity is a difficult task, their writings leave the impression of unfree from bias and one sided, to some extent. To establish facts they have tried to show the sense of documantation but that seems to be limited only to a few religious works only.

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CHAPTER VII

RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL REACTIONS

Relations with Singh Sabha Amritsar

Singh Sabha Bhasaur brought a new life in Singh Sabha Movement in the cis-Sutlej region since it was puritan and fundamentalist in the interpretation of Sikh principles. Teja Singh enjoyed the confidence of the founder of the movement. They would, alongwith other prominent Sikh leaders like Kahan Singh Nabha and Bhai Takhat Singh attend annual and other diwans of the Bhasaur Singh Sabha. This Sabha with the sole aim of 'bringing the Khalsa to its prestine purity' preached much, and in missionary work it adopted 'Shudhi', conversion of its own kind. They aimed at giving equality to the lower classes who had been denied this privilege and were not allowed to worship freely even after embracing the Sikhism. They equally tried to give equality to women folk. Teja Singh was accompanying the workers of Lahore and Amritsar Khalsa Diwan to attend religious functions in all places to propagate Khalsa's mission among masses and teaching them to shed untouchability, empty rituals etc. His dedication compelled him to resign his post.

It became evident that Singh Sabha Bhasaur would side with the Lahore Diwan that had become more liberal and disbelieving in the narrow mindedness of the disabilities of

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untouchables and special treatment to Bedis and Sodhis.[1] After the death of important leaders of Lahore Diwan its place was taken by Amritsar Diwan, due to the entry of Sunder Singh Majithia, a forward and broad mind worker. Teja Singh also shifted to Majithia group. And their combined efforts resulted in 1901 in Chief Khalsa Diwan.

Relations with Chief Khalsa Diwan:

Chief Khalsa Diwan was established with the inaugural prayer 'Ardas' offered by Teja Singh of Bhasaur on October 30,1902,[2] in a meeting held in Malvai Bunga of Golden Temple. Out of 150 Singh Sabhas 29 agreed to join Chief Khalsa Diwan and Bhasaur Singh Sabha was one of them. Teja Singh was active in Diwan's work in the company of Arjan Singh Bagrian, Sunder Singh and Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid. But estrangement was natural between the two contradictory groups of moderates and revolutionaries. The elite and rich people in majority could not go beyond certain limits in reforms. On the other side the peasants and workers of cis-Sutlej area desired radical reforms as they 'challenged much of the prevalent Sikh usages'. They were mostly peasants who were more inclined towards the democratic traditions enounciated by Guru Gobind Singh and had no sympathy for British autocratic rule. They

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1. Shamsher Singh Ashok, "Panth Rattan Babu Teja Singh" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23, p. 11.

2. Chief Khalsa Diwan di Salana Report (1902-1903), p.5.

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advocated Guru Gobind Singh's ideology with the frenzy of revolution. They demanded equality of sexes, rejection of all priests s who were not properly baptised. Sunder Singh Majithia did not intend to have compromise with this Bhasaur group. They were condemned by the Chief Khalsa Diwan as fanatics and rebels. In this clash of ideology the gulf widened between the two opposing factions and hence defection was inevitable. Moreover, Bhasaur group wanted their Diwan in their own state wanting reforms and preaching of Sikh culture and religion. They separated themselves from the Chief Khalsa Diwan and organized a new Diwan known as Panch Khalsa Diwan namely Khalsa Parliament, Bhasaur in 1907.

The Chief Khalsa Diwan and Panch Khalsa Diwan are described as "two sons" of Singh Sabha Movement. The former believed in loyalty to the crown while the later was bearing the banner of 'Panthic' loyalty, supported by important scholars in its resolve.[1] Khalsa Parliament was a supreme council of the Khalsas, a Panchayat, or democratic set up to show the paths of politics and religion. Since in Sikh religion politics and religion are combined to follow the politico-religious way. The Khalsas "had not developed the fine sense of doubtful value that divides life into water tight compartments and makes of religion in the West something different

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1. Amar Singh, "Panth Rattan Babu Teja Singh Ji", "Panch Khand Bhasaur", in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23, (April, 1964), p. 4.

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from one's social and political life".[1] They believed that politics is nothing but a promising child of religion. To achieve freedom the strong post should be religion from which one should start to get back the lost liberty.

Bhasaur people equally believed in partyless and spiritual democracy so it depended on 'Gurmata' a universal acceptance of opinions and not 'Mata' or majority decision. With such ideological background Bhasaur people unfurled the flag of the purification of the Khalsa including the rectifications of various distortions and extrapolations, as they styled them, in Guru Granth. They initiated the controversis of Ragmala, Mulmantra, Bhatt's hymns and Bhagauti's use in prayer.

Chief Khalsa Diwan became more insistent that Ragmala should not be separated from the Granth, inspite of various evidences given by the various scholars. Panch Khalsa Diwan by a Gurmata had started the publication of Granth without Ragmala. Giani Sher Singh of Bhasaur Movement alongwith Master Mota Singh came out with books 'Ragmala Khandan' and 'Hasur Ragmala'. Moreover the matter of breaking the lines of hymns to separate words called 'Pad Shed' of the Granth, raised much noise in Chief Khalsa Diwan.

To an impartial observer this 'Pad Shed' would appear a mere excuse because a 'Pad Wand Committee' had already been

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1. Sardul Singh Kaveeshar, "The Akali Movement" in Punjab Past and Present, Vol. VII (April 1973), pp.123-24.

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established which included many prominent scholars.[1] This committee unanimously decided to print and publish the Bir and for this purpose five thousand rupees were collected. When printing started in Gurmat Press, Amritsar some Chief Khalsa Diwan's supporters stopped its printing by force beyond 'Rag Gauri'. Teja Singh was branded for having started breaking the sanctity of the Sikh Scripture and canon. He changed the 'Ardasa' excluding 'Bhagauti'. Chief Khalsa Diwan requested the Maharaja of Patiala to forbid Teja Singh from publishing Granth without Ragmala resulting in government's warning of June 5, 1918.[2]

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1. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan de Note" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23 (June,1964), p. 4. This committee included Bhai Vir Singh, Sant Gurbax Singh, Daswandhi Committee Patiala, Giani Sher Singh, S.Man Singh Waqeel, Giani Thakur Singh, Diwan Lila Ram, Pandit Ram Singh Doaba, Prof. Jodh Singh, Sardar Sewa Ram, Giani Gurbax Singh Barister, S. Kahn Singh Nabha and Babu Teja Singh.

2. Translated from the Punjabi version reproduced in Gurmate Parkash, pp. 37-38 cited by Professor Harbans Singh in Punjab Past and Present, Vol. XI, p. 328.

> We have received many telegrams and letters which carry complaints against the printing by Teja Singh Bhasaur of Sri Guru Granth Sahib without Ragmala. We consider this as something most improper, for this can create inevitable conflicts among different bodies of the Sikh community endangering harmony which generally characterizes this community. Hostility once aroused can lead to undesirable consequences and be a cause of disturbaing peace in general. We do not join issue on whether Ragmala is gurbani or not, but it is our confirmed belief that no portion of the sacred Book can be expunged from it. We order that Teja Singh has as many copies of Ragmala printed as the copies of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib without Ragmala. He should distribute these copies to those who bought the Sri Guru Granth Sahib published by him. After this has been done, he should report to us that the order has been complied with. As a subject of our State and as an old officer of our State who receives pension from it, it is incumbent upon him to carry out the orders passed by our Government.

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Role in Gurdwara Reform Movement

Though Panch Khalsa Diwan was not a political body yet it was not ignorant about the events in its surrounding. It passed resolution on the annual diwans of 1918, 1919 and 1920 that the Sikhs should be given the control and management of the Sikh Gurdwaras and Government should end all undue interference. Diwan distributed the copies of these decision in lacs among the people, free of cost.[1] In contemporary periodicals excesses of the Mahants are given much airs.[2]

These decisions initiated the demand for reforms in Sikh Shrines which led to the formation of 'Pujari Sudhar Dal' (Akali Jatha).[3] So there remains no doubt that the priestly class was provoked to oppose this movement, since it set the ice ball rolling for the reforms in the Shrines. Where they (the priests) were having deep economic interests protected by the government.

Relations with Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee

The Bhasaur movement claims that in the first Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee made on 15th of November,

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1. Lal Singh, op.cit., p. 15.

2. Panth Sewak (December 4, 1914), Lahore.

3. (i) Dhowat, G.N. Dictionary of World History, p. 33.
   The Sikh zealots who took upon themselves the duty of censors of the community. They formed Shiromany Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in early 20's.

   (ii) Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement.

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1920, there were many workers of this movement.[1] In Akali's efforts to liberate Gurdwaras from the Mahants, this movement had sympathy and might have participated in that Akali's movement. The martyrs of Nankana Morcha[2] were given honour and title by Panch Khalsa Diwan. S. Lachhman Singh of Dharowal, who was burn alive, was one of the prominent well-wishers of Panch Khalsa Diwan. The policy of the Diwan was to preach the unstincted principles of the Khalsa. It never supported any provoking slogan. It wished that the religion should not be misused. But it developed estrangement with the Akalis,[3] because, in 1921, exceptions had been taken to Sikhs seeking advice of non-Sikh leaders in their religious matters. Akalis were quoted being in touch with Mahatma Gandhi in Nankana Sahib Morcha (Feb. 1921).[4]

Panch Khalsa Diwan celebrated 'Nabha Day' on September 9, 1923 when there was great protest for the dethronement of the Nabha ruler, on July 9,1923. Panch Khalsa Diwan sent a deputation to support the cause of Nabha ruler, who met Patiala ruler in Kashmir.[5] But a letter addressed to

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1. Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 15, p. 101.
2. Akali, August 24, 1921, Lahore. The Mahant Nankana Narain Das was found giving bribes to government offices to hush up the murders of Akalis.
3. Panjab Darpan (1921) Amritsar. Gandhi's comments that in Sikhs government's agents were creating troubles was disliked.
4. Lal Singh, Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan Sabandhi Suchnavan, 1967, p. 145.
5. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazette, Vol. 23, Sept. 1964, p. 14.

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Teja Singh from S.G.P.C. to invite scholars for a meeting on Panthic Organization dated January 4, 1926 bears testimony that Panch Khalsa Diwan still enjoyed good relations with S.G.P.C.'s Akali Dal.[1] But why the Diwan withdrew is the question. Reasons may be suggested that in Akali Dal there came the majority of the people who were not fully following up the 'Khalsa Code of Conduct'. There was no obligation to be a baptised for the voters.[2] To become a Sikh by oath was considered by Bhasaur leaders to prove the uselessness of the propagation of 'Khanda', the baptism of a double edged sword.

The incident of the attack of Nirbhai Akali Dal on Panch Khalsa Diwan resulted in a resolution, adopted by the Panch Khalsa Diwan, that had already disclaimed the Sahajdhari Sect of the Sikhs, and that had forbidden to place Faridkoti Teeka by the side of Guru Granth. Now in 1928 it declared the Chief Khalsa Diwan a body of men unfirm of conviction.[3] Bhai Vir Singh, a Sikh sholcar was laid under penalty for his secret propagation of the cult of personal deification.[4]

On April 1928 Bhai Kahan Singh and Teja Singh received 'Death Notice'[5] from a group of misled Akalis :

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1. Ibid., pp- 12-13.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 145.
5. Lal Singh, Amolak Amar Phul, p. 33.
   Translated from Panjabi in this volume.

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To (the people who are doing open mischiefs in Guru Khalsa) - Babu Teja Singh and Kahan Singh, the authors of the book, Guru Granth, you both are guilty. And so Panth has given you death sentence. Come to the Akal Takhat to apologise and to refrain from doing mischiefs in future. Otherwise you will be killed. Be sure both of you will be killed according to the Panthic order. Days are approaching, world would see and it would become a precedent.

Yours sincere but
now blood thirsty,
We are
Dushat Dokhian Pakar Pachar Dal
25.4.28

Teja Singh addressed that notice in open meeting, like Martin Luther. And he told that he was ready for this treatment but he remained fearless and balanced.

Finally he was excommunicated by a edict of Shri Akal Takhat Amritsar by S.G.P.C. on July 10, 1928. And on August 9, 1928 the following Hukamnama was issued:

"The Panch Khalsa Diwan Bhasaur has published the books called 'Gurmukhi Courses', in which the bani of Guru Granth has been grabled and its order changed. Changes have been made in 'Gurmantras' 'the' 'Ardas' and the ceremonies for administering 'Amrita'. They are anti-Sikh proceedings.

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"Hence Babu Teja Singh and Bibi Niranjan Kaur are hereby excommunicated from the Panth. Other members of the Panch Khalsa Diwan are debarred for having ardas offered on their behalf at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib or any other Gurdwara.

"No Sikh should purchase Gurmukhi Courses published by the Panch Khalsa Diwan, nor keep them in his possession. The Panch Khalsa Diwan and who ever else has copies of these should send them to Sri Akal Takhat Sahib."[1]

But Babu Teja Singh never felt depressed and remained busy in his dedicated work. After the death of Babu Teja Singh in 1933 we do not find active relations of this movement with SGPC. Only in 1941 there was an agitation by the Sikh Panth against the Namdharis' 'Patra Path' by which all pages of Granth were distributed at many places to start reading simaltaneously. A tract came with the name of Bhai Jiwa Singh and Panch Khalsa Diwan published a heart rendering declaration. Consequently the 'Patra Path' was abandoned.

It appears that after partition Panch Khalsa Diwan continued dealings with S.G.P.C. and in the Annual Diwan of Panch Khalsa Diwan in 1964, passed a resolution praising Sant Fateh Singh's efforts for Panjabi Suba, accepted by Centre and State Governments. By another decision No. 2 it was urged to the government to have religious education in schools and

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1. Bhai Vir Singh (ed.) Shri Gurpartap Suraj Granth, Sikhs, p. 2139 (footnote) cited by Professor Harbans Singh in Punjab Past and Present, Vol. IX, p. 329.

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colleges in its new laws. By Gurmata No.5 Government was suggested to keep Sikh religious traditions intact alongwith Punjabi speaking. This becomes clear that these resolutions of this movement might have won sympathy if not support of the Akali party.

In 1966, a case was registered in the Court of Judicial Commissioner, Chandigarh to control Panch Khand, Bhasaur. The Gurdwara Act of 1925 in which Bhasaur Movement had helped a lot was to be revoked against Panch Khand Bhasaur. In October 1966, a deputation waited upon S.G.P.C.'s leaders - Sant Fateh Singh, Sant Charan Singh and S. Jagdev Singh, member of Internal Committee. All leaders admitted clearly that they wished to keep Panch Khalsa Diwan intact. Its unparallel services to Sikhism were praised. It was assured that S.G.P.C. would respect the dignity of this movement and would not do any-thing to hurt the prestige of Panch Khalsa Diwan.[1]

Government's Attitude towards Bhasaur Movement

The ruler of the State in which Bhasaur Movement was active was a Sikh and had no differences with Bhasaur Movement. He gave all helps for the school of Panch Khalsa Diwan. On annual Diwans tents and seating arrangements were made by the Maharaja and ~~sent~~ from Patiala Army and foods were sent for help.[2] Once he gave five thousand rupees for 'langar.'

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1. Amar Singh, op.cit., p. 6.

2. Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 15 (May-July,1956), pp. 102-103.

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The Nawab of Malerkotla was much helpful and had all sympathies for this movement. The Nabha ruler personally visited there twice and gave all help. Once Maharaja Patiala sanctioned two lack rupees for Vidya Bhandar. But the leader of this movement, Babu Teja Singh would not comprosise with any Sikh who practiced relaxation in Khalsa Code of Conduct. In 1910 Maharaja of Patiala invited teams for annual Diwans to be held at Chail on Dushera day. Babu Teja Singh was invited with a group of school girls. His rivals intentionally asked him to distribute the sacred pudding. According to the tradition of the State pudding was given to Maharaja first of all. Teja Singh knew that Maharaja was a perverted Sikh. So he did not include him in five beloveds. When Maharaja extended his hands, Teja Singh did not give him the sacred pudding. Maharaja was provoked by the rivals of Teja Singh and Maharaja became the enemy of the Bhasaur Movement.[1] The grant for schools was also lapsed.

The use of the word 'Khalsa Parliament' was a novel experiment in that autocratic princely states. The supreme body of the Panchayas was a new experiment though for religious purposes. It created consternation in the autocratic rules, Patiala and Indian Governments feared nationalism to which this movement may give rise. Babu Teja Singh was offered five lack rupees if he stops the use of word 'Parliament'. But the

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1. Romesh Walia, Parja Mandal Movement in the East Panjab States, p. 21. Babu Teja Singh refused to supply girls from his school so the Maharaja became enemy. Another version says that Babu himself was corrupt.

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offer was refused resulting in strained relations with the Government.

The British intelligence department developed apprehension due to the popularity of Panch Khalsa Diwan among the military men of Indian Army. 'Ki (ਕਿ:) word was ~~mixt~~ misinterpreted as prefix to the word 'king'. On the other hand secret reports told that Diwan had used Parliament word for political motives. On one room, as report said, it was written as "Panch Khand Wich Khalsa Parliament House".[1] Donation from American Sikhs of 11,000 rupees was held consequently by the government lest it should be utilized for political motives. And Patiala Government was asked to verify the Accounts of Panch Khalsa Diwan time and again.

Government asked the Maharaja of Patiala to close this so called parliament. So the Maharaja of Patiala used his political pressure to end the use of this detested word. Teja Singh was warned on 5th June 1912 by an order from Patiala Ijlas-i-Khas:[2]

"Teja Singh has already been warned to desist from the use of the name 'Khalsa Parliament' but he has not paid any heed to these instructions. Therefore we further order him that he should desist from the use of this word henceforth.

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1. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan "
   in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 25, Sept.1964, p.15-16.
2. Lal Singh, ed. Amolak Amar Phul, pp. 21-22.

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"If these instructions are not executed our government would be constrained to take the action considered appropriate by itself."

Teja Singh was alleged for having started grabling the Sikh canon in his literalist zeal. The new experiment of Panch Khalsa Diwan with 'Gurbani' led to the wide spread protest. Maharaja Patiala was approached to stop this movement of grabling with Sikh scriptures. A notice was issued on June 5, 1918 to Teja Singh:

> "We have received many telegrams and letters which carry complaints against the printing by Teja Singh Bhasaur of Sri Guru Granth Sahib without Ragmala. We consider this as something most improper, for this can create inevitable conflicts among different bodies of the Sikh community endangering harmony which generally characterizes this community. Hostility once aroused can lead to undesirable consequences and be a cause of disturbing peace in general. We do not join issue on whether Ragmala is gurbani or not, but it is our confirmed belief that no portion of the Sacred Book can be expunged from it. We order that Teja Singh has as many copies of Ragmala printed as the copies of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib without Ragmala. He should distribute these copies to those who brought the Sri Guru Granth Sahib published by him. After this has been done, he should report to us that the order has been complied with. As a subject of our State and as an old officer of our State who receives pension from it, it is incumbent upon him to carry out the orders passed by our Government.
>
> Additionally, it is noted that Teja Singh has already been directed several times to desist from using the name "Khalsa Parliament".
>
> But he has not given any attention to these directions. So we further order that he should give up the use of this designation.

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If these directions are not carried out, our Government will be compelled to take such action as might be considered appropriate."[1]

Teja Singh replied that notice on 20th of August 1918 that he was ready to accept any punishment given by the Patiala ruler. To see the courage Teja Singh and his popularity, Bhupinder Singh did not press for the arrest of Babu Teja Singh.

Inspite of that notice Panch Khalsa Diwan tried to conciliate its differences with the State. When Maharaja Bhupinder Singh came after his successful participation in First World War and Afghan War, he was offered the title of 'Bir Jang' by the Panch Khalsa Diwan. But the Maharaja declined considering this his insult, to accept a title from that, so called Parliament. Consequently, as has already been related influenced, by some reasons, he was unable to shed his prejudice towards this movement. And he tried his power to frustrate this socio-religio movement.

It is believed that by a Gurmata in 1919 Panch Khalsa Diwan resolved that the Sikh prisoners should not be asked to detach five symbols in jail. Correspondence was entered

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1. Translated from the Punjabi version reproduced in Gurmate Parkash, pp. 37-38 cited by Professor Harbans Singh in Punjab Past and Present, Vol. XI, p.328.

2. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 25, p. 16.

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with the Government which was asked to provide 'Gurdwaras' for the prisoners in jail.[1] Other contemporary organizations too were demanding to allow 'Rahit' in jails and the release of all political prisioners.[2]

Bhasaur Movement was sending literature in the army. When Kirpan agitation started during First World War it sided with the Sikh soldiers who were teased for keeping their beard untied and wearing of Kirpan. Teja Singh helped them to face all odds.[3] 'Kirpan Wirlap' was published in 1919 and distributed among the soldiers. He gave pensions to the soldiers who were discharged from army. He gave them the title of 'Kirpan Bahadur' and 'Daraha Bahadur'. During First World War steel halmet was imposed for Sikhs. But the matter was left on Khalsa Parliament to decide, when some Sikh soldiers agitated against the wearing of halmet. Hawaldar Bhadur Singh told all misery to the Diwan which decided to ask the Government to drop the law of the wearing of Halmet. Government was pressurised and it passed a law to this effect. Consequently the British Government wrote to the ruler of Patiala to decrease the influence of Khalsa

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1. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan De Note" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol.23(Jan.,1971), pp.14-15.
2. Akali, September 11, 1920, Lahore.
3. Lal Singh, op.cit., (p.16) Four Jawans of First Safar Maina Cant, Rurki in the rank of Naik Hawaldars were discharged for having sword with belt of cloth. It was considered a violation of law. They were Sewa Singh, Bakhatgarh, Kehar Singh Thakur Singh Kaulwian and Munshi Sjl Koterian. 'Kirpan Wirlap' was published and distributed for Their suspensions and people got suitable help from Panch Khalsa Diwan.

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Parliament which had become influential in Sikh armies of British Government.[1]

In 1922 a deputation consisting of Sardar Jang Singh, Sampuran Singh Dandrala and Teja Singh Gagarpur and Giani Lal Singh of Sangrur was sent to impress upon the Patiala Council and British Government in Allahabad Cantt to allow the wearing of Kirpan by the Sikh chavillary men in the army.[2]

The relations with Patiala State took a new turn when Panch Khalsa Diwan passed a Gurmata to ask the Patiala ruler to have a Sikh Chief Minister. Pandit Daya Kishan Kaul, the then Chief Minister got annoyed due to the undue interference of the Panch Khalsa Diwan into the internal affairs of Patiala State. With Pandit's secret help a band of 200 Akali Dal's workers attacked Panch Khalsa Diwan from Sahore village in October 1921.[3] It was suspected that Chief Khalsa Diwan and S.G.P.C. leaders were the string pullers behind this attack. The attackers could not do any harm. A book 'Samjhauta Parkash' throws ample light on this attack in which Teja Singh presented himself to be ready for any sacrifice. When no other method succeeded the rivals approached Patiala police which locked Panch Khand.

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1. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 25, (August 1964), p. 15.
2. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan De Note" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 23, (June 1964), p. 14.
3. A signed statement of Giani Harbhajan Singh son of Babu Teja Singh.

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When no other plan worked the Patiala Police arrested Babu Teja Singh without any allegation[1] from Panch Khand in December, 1921. He was kept in Kotwali of Patiala. For three days he did not touch water and food,[2] since his Kirpan was detached from his body. He sent for Giani Lal Singh from Malaya. Then Bhai Ranjodh Singh, Bhai Basawa Singh and Bhai Sewa Singh alongwith Giani Lal Singh were arrested and sent to Sunam Jail. All accounts were verified by an Accountant of the Government. But no discrepency was found. At last when a deputation from Malaya[3] waited upon Maharaja he released 'the state priosoner' on 18th of Sawan 1922 A.D. after seven months' stay in prison.[4]

As has already been mentioned from 1921 to 1934 Patiala police locked Panch Khand and the Police post of 6 soldiers created great difficulties for the workers of this movement. Iron boxes of treasury were taken to Dhuri tehsil where all treasure was taken out breaking locks. Cart loads of books were taken to Patiala from its library.[5]

When a college was started in place of school in 1926 again Patiala State issued a notice from the court of District

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1. Harbhajan Singh's signed statement.
2. Giani Harbhajan Singh Personal Interview. Lal Singh, op.cit., p. 15. He went on fast for five days.
3. Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 15, p. 105. This deputation included Narain Singh Sawedi, Ghumand Singh Poola, Sham Singh Burj Naklian and Bachitar Singh Varoka.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

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Magistrate Sunam dated 25 Falgun 1925 A.D. stating that Bibi Niranjan Kaur and Babu Teja Singh should seek prior permission of the State Government to open this college otherwise they were to be prosecuted.[1] In its last attempt the Patiala state published a pamphlet called 'Hidyatnama' and got the consent of all Phulkian States Governments by which Panch Khalsa Diwan was considered to be an unlawful body. The registration of letters and parcels was refused with the name of Panch Khalsa Diwan or Khalsa Parliament by the Postal aurhtories.[2]

In this way we find that the Bhasaur Movement could not find favour with the Patiala Government, rather the movement was always taken as anti-government organization. In that suffocating atmosphere[3] of Patiala State it was not so congenial for a movement to flunish as in the Punjab. But undaunted by the pressure, unmindful of difficulties created by the governments, the leaders and workers of Bhasaur Movement struck to their viewpoint irrespective of the various impediments put by the Governments.

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1. Lal Singh, op.cit., p. 17.

2. Lal Singh, "Itihas Panch Khalsa Diwan" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 25. (Sept.,1964), p. 15.

3. Romesh Walia, op.cit., pp. 21-22,

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CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The Bhasaur Singh Sabha professed itself to be a purely religious body wedded to the idea of 'unabridged Khalsa way of life'. Its Sixth Guru had combined spiritual leadership with temporal one. The Creator of 'the Khalsa' had followed the same foot steps. But Panch Khalsa Diwan seems to be a staunch believer of the idea that politics was a promising child of religion. They argued that if their religion was safe they would get everything.

The leaders of Bhasaur Movement did not include in their objectives the idea to regain the liberty. They would profess that they were pursuing the policy of constant vigilence lest the religion should be misused by the selfish leadership. Therefore provoking sentiments and high sounding slogans had no value for them. They adopted the policy of "peaceful non-violence." Its leader Babu Teja Singh wished a universal peace where the fear of any kind should be outlawed. He argued that for the attainment of such peace, force should not be used. The Government should use the weapons of love instead of automic ones to control the masses. He expressed in one periodical in 1924 that the 'non-violent war' that was going on between the people and the Government's bureaucratic machinery, would create harmful results. Perhaps they were wise enough to learn the lesson from history, to avoid violence. The leaders

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of this movement had not forgotten the fate of Kuka Movement only a few decades ago.

However, peaceful this movement might be, it was bound to provoke the reactions. When they demanded reforms in prisons, in Sikh Shrines and supported the wearing of five Sikh symbols by the prisoners and soldiers, they were sure to face trouble. In fact the use of the word 'Khalsa Parliament' had serious implications. One is to analyse the motive of thought behind the use of this word. In that era of autocratic rule the use of 'Supreme Council of Panchas (elected representatives) of the Khalsa' seemed to have coined by political motives, which were alleged to lay dormant in the minds of its leaders.

The attitudes of the Patiala State Government seems to be influenced by limited motives. Its main aim was concerned with the maintenance of law and order in the state and it were right to quote the violence of Namdhari fanatics. The leaders of Bhasaur Movement would demand reforms and facilities for prisoners and soldiers. The government was helping this movement so long as its existence was not feared as a threat to peace, religious harmony and state's internal administration. But when Chief Khalsa Diwan complained about the 'distortions' as they alleged, made by the Panch Khalsa Diwan in the Sikh scriptures and 'Rahit' (codes), the Maharaja of Patiala joined with the Chief Khalsa Diwan to oppose the Bhasaur Movement through various methods. He himself appears to had developed

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prejudices against Babu Teja Singh.[1]

But on the other side the reaction of the British Government was not based on unfounded calculations. The use of the word 'Parliament' was objected, taking it as a challenge to the British Parliament. Moreover the Kirpan Agitation and steel halmet laws had made the influence of Bhasaur Movement, well known in Army headquarters. Consequently the government had to ask the Patiala ruler, the state in which this movement was working, to put his political pressure to decrease the influence of this movement.

Since the Gurdwara Reform Movement was going on in Punjab, the British Government was apprehensive that the people of Bhasaur Movement might not actively participate in that agitation. Therefore, they became more vigilent to have strict watch over the activities of this movement. This was done through the agency of Patiala State Government.

When this Movement asked for the appointment of a Sikh Chief Minister in Patiala Court, it was deemed as a direct interference in the state's affairs. Pandit Dia Kishan Kaul the then Chief Minister brought nearly two hundred hirelings,[2] generally misled Akalis of Sahore village, to attack Panch Khand Bhasaur, in 1921, which proved abortive one. When Teja Singh was given notice to vacate the office of the Secretary

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1. In Dushera celebrations at Chail, Babu had insulted Maharaja by ignoring him to give sacred pudding of five beloveds, but Romesh Walia's views about the demand of the Maharaja to supply girls which was refused by Babu can also be considered here the cause of animity.

2. Hanbhajan Singh's Signed Statement.

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of Panch Khalsa Diwan due to his marriage with his student, and Sikh soldiers had occupied Panch Khand,[1] Patiala Government took steps to avoid any voilence and arrested Babu Teja Singh,[2] though a contemporary witness says that he was arrested without any allegation. So this body was feared as political organization by both the governments, the British as well as the Patiala State.

But this is most unfortunate that the Bhasaur Movement did not try to feel the impulse of the time, when our country was crying for active nationalism. They could not rise above the narrow nationalism rather sectarian attitude and conservatism. They disliked the Akalis to seek guidance from a non-Sikh in religious matters during Gurdwara Reform Movement and created a gulf between their co-religionist body and themselves, which remained unabridged ever afterward.

In the religious sphere this movement had to combat with a utilitarian[3] Chief Khalsa Diwan a moderate body, whose pro-government attitude proved helpful in educational sphere. They were willing to give some relaxations in Sikh Code as acknowledged by the Panch Khalsa Diwan in 'Milgobha Sudhar'. On the other side Panch Khalsa Diwan started a programme of radical reforms in Sikhism. So in the field of Sikh theology

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1. Nahar Singh Paraich, Khalsa Istri ate Sikh Bibian di Widya, p. 36.
2. Harbhajan Singh son of Babu Teja Singh.
3. Philological Society, The Oxford English Dictionary, p. 484.

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and Sikh Code of Conduct, Chief Khalsa Diwan fiercly opposed the Panch Khalsa Diwan on so many issues. The first important issue was that the Chief Khalsa Diwan wanted ~~that~~ the purity and sanctity of its text, without breaking the lines into words. Panch Khalsa Diwan was of the view that the words of 'Adi Granth' should be separated in printing (Pad Shed). Evidently the latter's point of view was more scientific and more suitable for the educational purposes.[1] But the Chief Khalsa Diwan opposed it for the sake of opposition. It is significant to note that after long controversies Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandhak Committee, the supreme religious body of the Sikhs has ultimately adopted the same point of view which was advocated by the leaders of Bhasaur Movement.

Another controversy rose on the separation of Rag Mala from Adi Granth which was considered not included by the author. Some contemporary newspapers give a wider picture.[2] Chief Khalsa Diwan seemed to oppose the exclusion on personal grounds.[3]

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1. See Chapter VI

2. Panth Sewak (Ragmala Number) Lahore (October 24, 1917). Bhai Vir Singh was criticised bitterly for opposing the exclusion which he had started himself earlier.

3. Chanda Singh, 'Panch Khalsa Jatha Malaya' in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 15 (May-July 1956), p. 75. First of all Chief Khalsa Diwan preached the reading of Granth without Ragmala. Panch Khalsa Diwan had given this duty of printing such 'Birs' to Chief Khalsa Diwan. But the latter did not print because Wazir Hind Press had many old copies already printed. If new copies were printed, no body would purchase the old ones, resulting in a big loss to this press of Chief Khalsa Diwan. So the latter started opposition of the Panch Khalsa Diwan on this issue.

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It is not less appealing that they proved their contentions from the Sikh scriptures viz. Guru Granth Sahib, Bhai Gurdas Wars and other authentic writings. The suggestion that Nanak birthday falls in the month of Baisakh and martyrdom of the 'Forty Muktas' should be celebrated on the day of its happening 21st of Baisakh (1705) instead of Ist of Magh (January), seem to be not based on invalid reasons and evidences.

The social and religious reforms are equally important. This movement sowed the seed of puritan revolution. It was a single institution to preach 'unstinted Sikhism' with drum beating in every house. Empty rituals of Hinduism, that had Hinduised Sikhism were criticised openly. Panch Khalsa Diwan was considered as a testing stone of 'Gurmat'. The preachers of Gurmat had to face many obstacles like Namdhari, Singh Sabha and Akalis to preach 'Gurmat' in a Sikh society who had become half-Hindu with all 'Arties', 'Shradhs' and pilgrimage ceremonies. It would not be denying the fact that if there had been no Singh Sabha Movement with its scholars like Dit Singh, Gurmukh Singh, Jawahar Singh and Kahan Singh to feel the pulse of the time and if there were no vigorous opposition of Hinduization by the Panch Khalsa Diwan, with its 'Jihad' against mixed Sikhism, the entire code of conduct of the Sikhs might have been changed.

The 'Shudhi' movement of Bhasaur Singh Sabha was much attractive. Without any religious consideration the apostates andother low caste people were taken into 'the Khalsa.' Bakapur Diwan of 1903 bears testimoney to the popularity of this

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movement. There are long lists of converts from other religions. Previously the outcastes were denied equality of worship.[1] Now the Bhasaur Movement levelled all inequalities once again. One had to leave previous caste andname and assume new faith (Khalsa) after baptism. It was a forward step. But the Sikhs in general have been averse to this reform.

This movement deserves special credit for the work done for the uplift of women folk through education and granting them equality in social and religious spheres. They were allowed the nector prepared by a double edged sword, a right denied to them previously. Laws of divorce were liberalized. The grave evils of society were forbidden strongly. Free female education based on spirituality was a unique and pioneer experiment, which has no parallel in our country. The girls were given free boarding and lodging facilities. In social reforms, marriage ceremonies were simplified, dowry, child marriage, intoxicants were discontinued.

But we can not know the exact figures of the followers of this movement since there is no separate entry for them in census reports.[2] From their literature we can assess that they were having their followers[3] in The Patiala & East Punjab States

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Harbhajan Sirh, 'Jum Sahil Haon Kaubar Bara'.

1. The Sikhs from lower castes were denied worship in Gurdwara Amritsar in 1910 and then in Gurdwara Fatehgarh Sahib.
2. Census of India 1921 Vol. I, Part II, p. 41. Table of Punjab Province shows the entry by religion - Sikhs were 813089. And total population is shown as 4416036.
3. Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 15 (May-July 1956), pp. 130-141.

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Union around its headquarter and in the districts of Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Hissar and abroad, Malaya, Hongkong, Burma and China.

With all these achievements to its credit this movement could not win much success to become a mass-movement. And it will not be out of place to assign and analyse the various causes to its arrested progress.

It was clear that the reformation introduced by Singh Sabha Movement could not make much headway in the states where the people felt only a mild vibration. Moreover the tyranical and immoral regime of the Patiala Maharaja was not so congenial for springing up such reformatory movements, as in the Punjab.[1] The government developed apprehensions about this movement and always tried to frustrate this movement. Constant hostility of its home state government dissipated the vitality of this movement and as it is said it was outlawed in the long run.

Thus on religious front it had to contend with a supreme central body of the Sikh community. Chief Khalsa Diwan took hostile attitude and a newspaper combat with this movement started due to the controversies of the exclusion of Ragmala and other theological issues. In this ideological war the Chief Khalsa Diwan with all resources at its command was sure to have upper hand. So the revolutionary voice of this

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1. Romesh Walia, Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab States, p. 21.

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movement was suppressed through governmental pressure.

The attack of some misguided and ignorant Akalis on the Panch Khandin 1921 was not the less responsible for defaming the movement. The people took it in the negative attitude, that the Akalis have been right, as they had started Gurdwara Reform agitation and had become popular among masses.

As has already been suggested, this movement had limited sphere of activities, confined to the demands for religious and social reforms, though they were not ignorant of their surroundings. They wanted reforms in Sikh Gurdwaras and offered first aid services for the wounded soldiers in First World War, yet they clung to the policy of constant isolation from the contemporary upserge of nationalism. When they criticised Akalis for consulting Mahatma Gandhi a nationalist leader, they might have lost the sympathy of nationalist elements.

Then this movement had limited resources. Its income was donations only, which were unstable. No land etc. or property was to become its permanent source of income. It did not own any press for the publication of its works. It lacked any newspaper or weekly to keep masses in touch with its activities except a monthly. Propagation through the press was less as compared to its rival Chief Khalsa Diwan.

Another cause may be suggested that the Bhasaur village was not more than a simple village, isolated from other parts of the country. If this movement was having its headquarter

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in a well connected urban area, it would have become more popular. It was situated in an autocratic state resulting in physical and political harrasment to this movement in that suffocating atmosphere.

This movement started many controversial activites giving rise to many ideological differences. Many newspapers, Societies and Sabhas disliked its innovations. Though those findings are being acknowledged one by one but in contemporary times those ideological differences did harm to the popularity of this movement.

And the more important cause which can be assigned to its slow progress was the creation of a void after the death of its dynamic leader Babu Teja Singh. This movement could not produce an able person of Babu's calibre. After his death upto the coming of Chanda Singh as manager of Panch Khalsa Diwan all arrangements had been almost ended.

And the last cause given for the slow progress of this movement was the marriage of its leader Babu Teja Singh with one of his student Bibi Niranjan Kaur, which as it is said tarnished the image of this movement. Historian is not required to pass moral judgement since the standpoint of a moralis and of a historian are not identical. One is concerned with personal life only to the extent it affected his leadership. But it would appear injustice to agree with the people who would call him a man of loose character, who married for the fourth[1] time with a student.

1. Wisakha Singh, op. cit., p. 273. It was his second marriage.

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There is no harm in a well arranged marriage as they did. But it had seriousimplications for this movement, is a fact which can not be denied. He contradicted the laws of divorce made by Panch Khalsa Diwan. A man marrying for the fourth time was sure to loose his prestige in that conservative society of India. And many illusions were shrowded around his intelectual, creative and genious potentialities. People might have lost confidence in the education given in that college and donations might have been stopped from the neutral persons.

But we must acknowledge the legacies of this movement. Its simplification in ceremonies, equality of the women and low castes in Sikhism, opposition to empty rituals are also much needed in the present context. Its findings have special value for our traditional and scriptural problems and demand deserving place in historical and literary fields of research.

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APPENDIX

PANCH KHALSA DIWAN ABROAD

In Malaya:

As the Singh Sabha Movement had spread in other countries, it took the shape of Panch Khalsa Movement with the passage of time. Malaya, Hongkong and Africa were among the important centres of the Panch Khalsa movement.

In Malaya, the first preacher of the Khalsa Diwan Malaya was Bhai Gujjar Singh who popularised and preached Gurmat in that country. In Perak, Phusing Gurdwara was the only where Ragmala was read with Adi Granth and even 'Arti' was performed there.[1]

The second preacher was Bhai Pal Singh. All Sardars of Malaya state guide preached 'Gurmat' and they donated much to Widya Bhandar Panch Khand in the days of First World War, when Panch Khalsa Diwan published Granth without Ragmala it was welcomed all over Malaya in 1915 A.D.

Babu Chanda Singh of Eipu, Perak gave one note in 'Panth Sewak' to send new editions of 'Granth' in Shanghai and Hongkong, if they could not have from homeland. It resulted in a big noise in 'Khalsa Samachar' under "Khatre di Ghanti". Nevertheless, Chief Khalsa Diwan was the first to preach for

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[1]. "Panch Khalsa Diwan Malaya" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee (May-July, 1966), pp. 74-78.

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ommitting 'Ragmala'. Panch Khalsa Diwan had given the duty of printing new editions to Chief Khalsa Diwan and the later did not publish new edition, since Wazir Hind Press had many volumes (copies) of old editions. If the new was printed the previous may result is a loss so they opposed the pleading of Panch Khalsa Diwan.

In the annual conference of Chief Khalsa Diwan, Malaya at ~~p~~ Penang, Ragmala was read; henceforth the Diwan was divided in two groups. The second was anti-Ragmala group named as Panch Khalsa Diwan Malaya in 1919. After one month at Kualalampur its second name was fixed as Guru Kalgidhar Diwan Malaya with all regulations of Panch Khalsa Diwan. But within one year its regulations were altered too. Its first conference was held in 1920 in Police Depot and the second in 1921 or 22 at Imbi Road Gurdwara. Friction occurred on the question of its election. So once again Panch Khalsa Jatha was made and registered with the Government in 1923. Its office bearers included Jathedar Rulia Ram Dhanaula.[1]

In its first annual report it brought in light the precarious conditions of the Sikh, social and religious, which seemed fearful. Religious education was stressed. Main aim was to preach the exact mission of the Gurus according to Khalsa Rahit Parkash.

~~1. Idem, p. 76.~~

1. Ibid., p.76. ~~Op.cit., p.76~~

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They declared that for 'Five beloved ones' one should have been (1) initiated, (baptised), (2) should have left five sins, (3) should be a regular reader of five 'Banis', (4) must be a donor of 'Daswaundh', (5) should not accept bribe, (6) should not eat any meat except 'Jhatka', (7) should not be eater of presented things to Guru Granth, (8) should not be a user of intoxicants.[1] It was decided that presented money should be spent in religious works and should not be given to 'Ragis' etc. They stressed, like other Panch Khalsa people to celebrate Birth-day of Nanak Dev Ji on Baisakhi day. In 1924 it was resolved that those members who are unable to contribute one Dollar per month to the Diwan, may give application to the Secretary; and the Executive Committee may decrease or remit that fee; 4 clerks were to be recruited for the work of the 'Jathas' in 4 Perak, Nagri Samilan, Pahing and Salangur; that the 'Rumala' of Guru Granth should not be pictorial. Five Members Committee was made to reform the converts from other sects. It was decided to meet the Commissioner for the permission of sword.

When Babu Teja Singh was arrested, a deputation of Malaya Diwan[2] of 4 members met the Maharaja of Patiala for Babu's release. Malaya Branches of Panch Khalsa Diwan had been in active service till the last decade. Babu Chanda Singh was among many active workers of this diwan, who left Malaya after retirement in 1946.

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1. Ibid, p. 79.
2. Ibid, p. 105.

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Hong Kong:

In China Sant Singh Chakravarti was the main preacher of pure Sikh principles. Bhai Lal Singh Ji Sangrur went to Hong Kong in 1908, and was sent to Babu Teja Singh for baptism in India. He met Babu at Bhikhi, canal house and received Baptism from 'five beloved'. He wrote Teja Singh's report about personal dealings in Sikhism and method of baptism etc., which was brought to Hong Kong according to the demand of the inhabitants of Hong Kong. According to the wish of Babu ji, Bhai Lal Singh went for missionary work in Hong Kong, where with the help of Santa Singh Chakravarti, Bhai Lal Singh established Panch Khalsa Diwan in 1909,[1] and Bhai Mangal Singh of Central Board was its President. When Bhai Takhat Singh Firozepur, and Giani Ishar Singh, Manager, Widyala, Tarn Taran went to collect funds, Lal Singh went with them for preaching. In the company of Bhai Santa Singh, Lal Singh went to Singhapur, Taping, Ipu, Kualalampur etc. and established 'Panch Khalsa jatha' at Pusing, with Bhai Ganesha Singh Sidiki of Dhilwan, Bhai Labh Singh Ji Premi, Bhai Samund Singh Raia, Babu Sarab Singh Pothohar etc. To do away with the ritual of 'Aarti' (worship with burning lamps) Bhai Ganesha Singh played important role, and he established Panch Khalsa Diwan at Dhilwan also.

In those days 'Malaya State Guide' was full of missionaries of Panch Khalsa Diwan, 'Khalsa Rahit Parkash' was

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1. Bhai Lal Singh Ji, Sangrur, "Pardesan wich Parchar" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol. 15, pp. 47-48.

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passed in one Gurmata at Panch Khand, Bhasaur in the presence of twenty thousand people including Sant Gurbax Singh Updeshak, Daswandh Committee, Giani Gian Singh, author of 'Twarikh Guru Khalsa' and 'Panth Parkash' and Bhai Arjan Singh Rais, Bagrian (President, Chief Khalsa Diwan), etc.

In Burma

In Burma, Dr. Randhir Singh and S. Lal Singh Kamla Akali were the special benefactors of Panch Khalsa Diwan.[46]

When Babu Teja Singh was under arrest, all Sikhs of Hong Kong Jatha came there and sent 500 rupees as help. Harnam Singh published one 'Wariam Guneha' tract and distributed in Hong Kong and collected seventeen hundred rupees and sent to Panch Khand. S. Wariam Singh ji of Nathana village published one tract in poetry, depicting the high-handedness of Maharaja Patiala and distributed in thousands in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong branch always cared for the progress of Panch Khalsa Diwan and kept the missionary work there in full swing.[47]

In South Africa

African Sikh people had full sympathy for Panch Khalsa Diwan. Sardar Kehar Singh of Lahore was the first missionary to start Panch Khalsa Diwan Movement in Africa. One Sardar

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46. Ibid, p. 50.

47. Harnam Singh Bajaj, "Hong Kong Wikha Panch Khalsa Diwan da Jatha" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, Vol.15, p. 70.

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Mukam Singh was among those Indians who came to Africa first of all and was member of Municipal Committee Narobi for 15 years. He had full belief in 'Gursikhi' and after his death his sons Uttam Singh and Amarjit Singh were the lover of Panch Khalsa Diwan. Their mother Bhagwant Kaur sent 500 rupees to Khalsa Quari College.

One Sardar Sohan Singh received baptism from Panch Khand in 1923 and was selected Director of Khalsa Quari College Council and Joint Secretary of Panch Khalsa Diwan. He was preaching Sikhism in Narobi in the last decade. Sardar Nazer Singh and Sardar Mangal Singh were other sympathisers of Panch Khalsa Diwan in Africa and they sent donations to the Diwan.

Bhai Ranbir Singh of Gujranwala shifted to Narobi in 1910 and started Kirtan and preaching according to the aims of Singh Sabha. He started one Jatha for 'Amrit Parchar' and baptised hundreds of people in Africa. His efforts resulted in the opening of Khalsa Girls School which imparted education to fourteen hundred boys and girls in Narobi. He was already preaching 'dastar' (turban) for girls. He was always anti-Ragmala. He and Bhai Keshar Singh got this resolution passed by the Sabha that Ragmala was not Guru's creation till 1916 Singh Sabha of Narobi was acting on this resolution.[1]

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1. "Panch Khalsa Diwan Africa Wich" in Khalsa Parliament Gazettee, ~~p. 73.~~ Vol. 15, p. 73.

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